WEST PAPUAN REFUGEES FROM IRIAN JAYA IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

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DECLARATION

This thesis represents original research undertaken for a Master of Arts Degree at the University of Queensland. The interpretations presented are my own and do not represent the view of any other person except where acknowledged in the text.

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To all the West Papuan refugees in the camps and in Port Moresby who were always helpful and welcoming, and despite their difficulties, so committed to their goal of West Papuan self-determination, I can only hope their resolution is one day rewarded. I thank them all sincerely.

Abstract

The armed resistance movement in Irian Jaya between the indigenous Melanesian West Papuans and the Indonesian military government has persisted for 30 years, despite the lack of international support for the West Papuan OPM *(Organisasi: Papua Merdeka* - Free Papua Movement) and the disinterest of the outside world. West Papuans are resisting ethnocide and forced incorporation into the Indonesian state; they identify with a pan-Melanesian nationalism in the Southwest Pacific where other movements, in New Caledonia and Bougainville, continue to challenge colonial and post-colonial governments.

In 1984, reaction to intense military action and extensive land take-over for transmigration schemes caused over 10,000 refugees to flee from Irian Jaya into Papua New Guinea. This forced some acknowledgment of the problem but the fate of the refugees has not been resolved. This thesis examines the situation of refugees who have waited for nearly a decade for a resolution of their predicament.

Fieldwork was carried out at the East Awin refugee camp in Papua New Guinea where refugees were forcibly relocated away from the Irian Jaya/Papua New Guinea border. The possibility of future sustainability of the camp site and environmental problems associated with large-scale settlement were investigated. Refugees were well aware of the problems; their insecurity was increased by the failure of the Papua New Guinea government to finalise the purchase of the land from the local landowners. This lack of a sustainable subsistence and legally approved land base means that a permanent, independent settlement at East Awin is unlikely. Projects designed to assist refugees to integrate into the wider community were studied in Port Moresby. The persistent refusal of a Third country to accept them, world-wide economic recession, exacerbated in Papua New Guinea by the close-down of the Bougainville copper mine, means that refugees who leave the camps also face a bleak future.

Note

In the text, New Guinea refers to the geographical landmass and surrounding islands. Irian Jaya ('Irian victorious') is an acronym from the Indonesian slogan *Ikut Republik Indonesia Anti-Netherlands* ('follow Indonesia against Holland') and *Jaya* ('victorious'). *Irian* is a Biak word meaning 'hot (or steamy) land rising from the sea'. The name *Irian Barat* (West Irian) was used during the years of the Indonesian take-over, and persisted after the renaming to 'Irian Jaya' in March 1973. The indigenous Melanesians refer to their country as West Papua and themselves as West Papuans (Sharp 1977a). However, unless another name is more suitable in a particular historical context, Irian Jaya is used here, as the country is generally not well known and the name Irian Jaya is accepted in common usage at this time.

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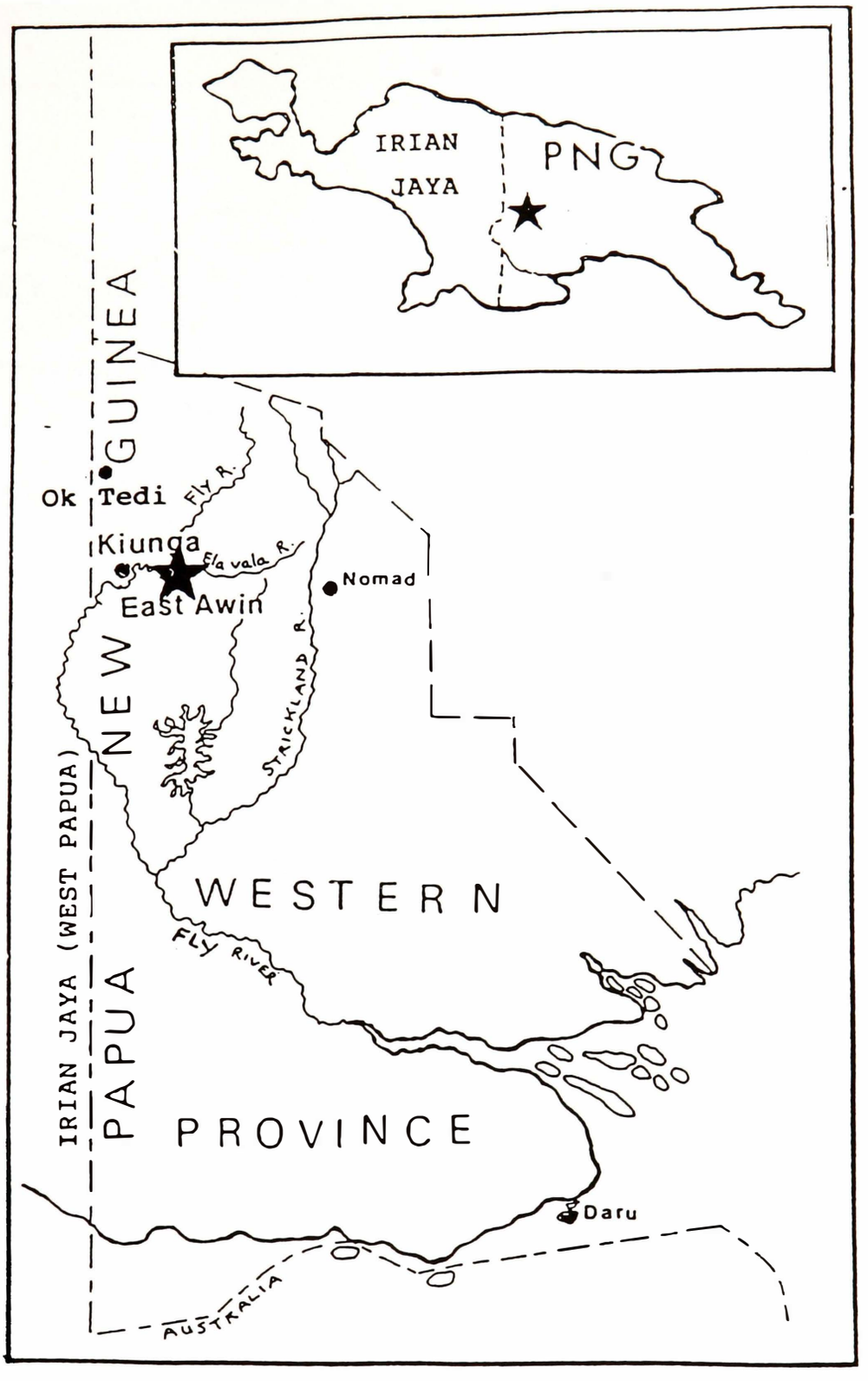

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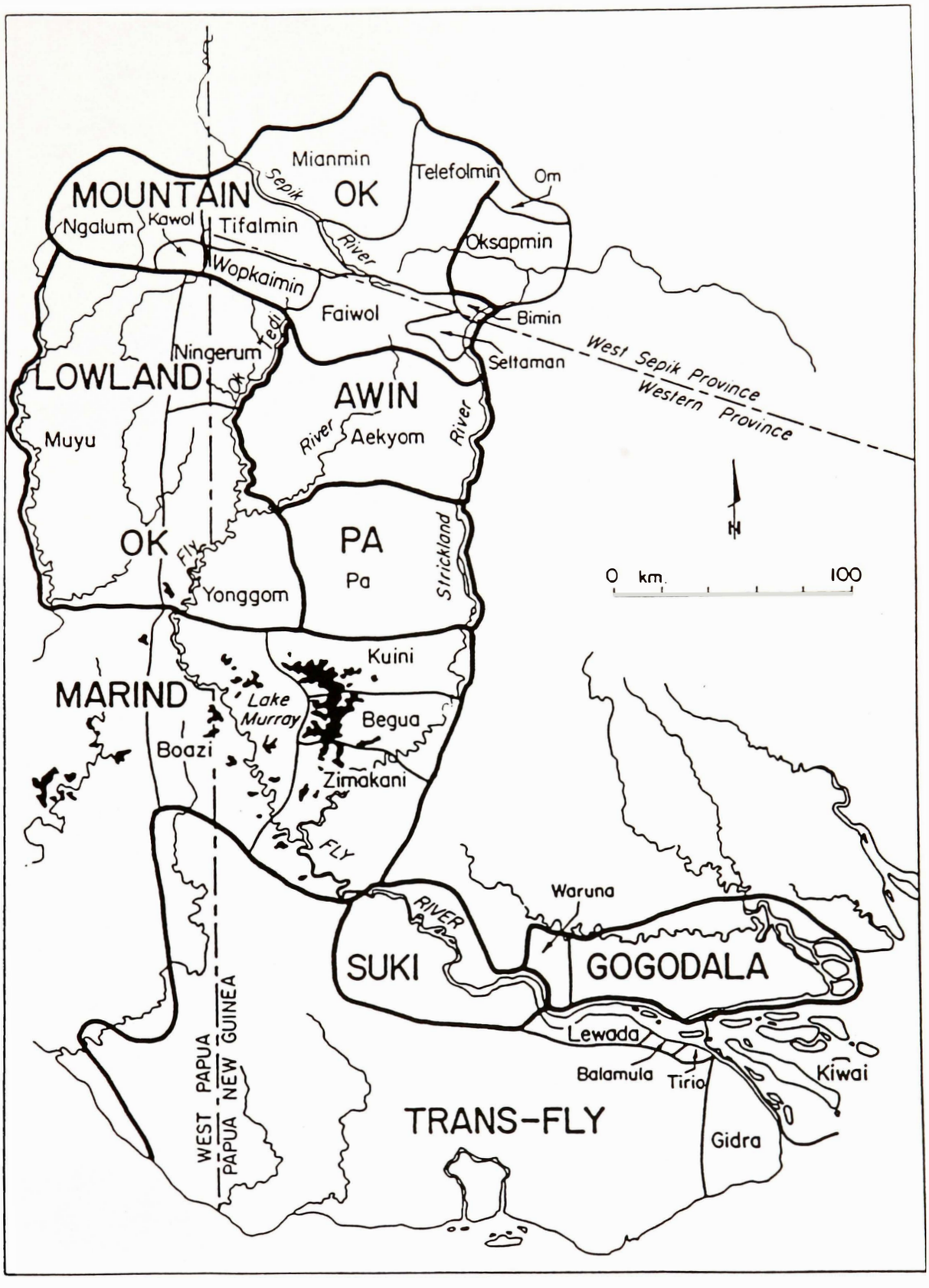

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CHAPTER ONE
REFUGEES AND RAINFOREST

INTRODUCTION

The on-going problem of refugees camped inside the Papua New Guinea border and living in refugee camps in the border regions of the West Sepik (Sandaun) and Western Provinces has complicated relations between the independent state of Papua New Guinea and the Republic of Indonesia. Since Indonesia annexed the western half of the island of New Guinea, previously Dutch New Guinea, formal relations between these neighbouring countries have been strained and in fact, a war between Indonesia and the West Papuan resistance fighters has persisted with serious implications for Papua New Guinea/Indonesia relations.

The severity of this war has always been denied by both countries, and ignored by their allies and the outside world. I became aware that the situation was not resolved when I was working in Papua New Guinea: many Papua New Guineans were concerned about border problems and what was happening over the border in Irian Jaya. This concern was not reflected in official government policy. Interest had grown among Papua New Guineans as their cognition of the situation evolved, the inevitable realisation of the contrast between their newly won independence and the lack of self-determination of their fellow Melanesians. Pressured by their own country's problems and in some cases by their official positions, many Papua New Guineans have been forced to forsake their public expression of sympathy. There remains an empathic bond and a feeling of solidarity among Melanesians, and despite the growing hardening of attitudes towards border problems generally by the Papua New Guinea government, the refugees were permitted to stay in Papua New Guinea, although without, to this day, a resolution of their status.

Media responses to the war and the West Papuan refugee problem are examined in this thesis. Today more than ever before the workings of the media are an integral part of life - media outlets do not merely mirror life or report on it, in many cases governments are impelled into strategies for action by the direction and force of the media. In relation to criticism of Indonesia, the direction here is towards the problems

of refugees dislocated by Indonesian military action and policies of resettlement (transmigration). During the course of writing a new phenomenon has appeared; published criticism from within Indonesia, dealing with political excesses, detainees, resource plunder and ecological devastation.

However, at this time, the criticism from within and without has not affected in any positive way the actions of the military government of Indonesia. The East Timor massacre of November 1991 grabbed world attention because foreign nationals, including journalists, were present and the news could not be smothered by Indonesian censorship. Irian Jaya is a 'closed' province (despite small numbers of tourists now visiting Jayapura and Wamena) and most information has been smuggled out of the country by intrepid and illegal visitors.

The war in Irian Jaya is one of the least publicised wars in the world, and powerful mainstream propaganda in Australia has sometimes attempted to follow Indonesian propaganda and relegate the fight for West Papuan self-determination to the status of a somewhat comic and pathetic 'raggle-taggle' war. The facts do not support this view.

Despite its neighbour status, Irian Jaya is virtually invisible to Australian eyes. While the economic and strategic concerns of powerful nations decide government policy toward such issues, it would be hard to deny that disinterest arises from the fact that racist attitudes are entrenched in the Australian psyche. The indigenous voice is generally disregarded, and as in East Timor, until outsiders witness the horrific events they will be ignored. For the moment, the West Papuan voice has made itself heard to the outside world in the actions of the refugees.

FIELDWORK IN THE FOREST

The aim of my post-graduate study was to visit the Western Province refugee camps in Papua New Guinea; to talk to refugees living in urban centres away from the camps and to meet with officials who are responsible for the refugees in order to gain an understanding of the position of the refugees and to place their struggle, so often ignored, in the context of Melanesian nationalism and secession movements.

Official permission from Papua New Guinea Foreign Affairs and Provincial Government for the field work in the Western Province camps had been obtained over several months before leaving Australia, and two weeks were spent in Port Moresby finalising arrangements for travel and accommodation. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and Departments of Foreign Affairs and Provincial Government assisted in full briefings, and arrangements for logistical support in the Western Province.

During the time spent in Port Moresby I was loaned a house in an outlying location (6 Mile) close to the extensive squatter settlements. Although there was no phone in the house (nor in any other local housing or public phone box in the area) the neighbouring Papua New Guinean families were friendly and supportive. The full-time use of a vehicle supplied by Papua New Guinean friends was a generous gift that made the groundwork for my fieldwork possible; a vehicle was at my disposal for the entire period - indeed without it, work would have been impossible.

My knowledge of New Guinea pidgin *(tokpisin)* was sufficient to enable passable communication. Most of the West Papuan refugees speak Bahasa Indonesia language as a lingua franca; as well as their own languages *(plestok)* some also speak Dutch and English. Many of the educated men speak excellent English, however, my interpreter assistant Solomon enabled me to interview many refugees, particularly women, at length. Also, his knowledge of the whereabouts and hierarchical situation of refugees living outside of the camps was a great asset, and his optimistic demeanour, despite the tragedies that have beset his family, was inspirational.

Officialdom

Considering the circumstances, and the difficult political situation, departments of the Papua New Guinea government had worked hard to organise the infrastructure for, and movement of bordercamp residents to, the large camp at East Awin. Very little publicity had been given to this transfer, or to border matters generally. Journalists and other outsiders were not welcome in the border area, and most applications to visit the camps were refused. I was fortunate in approaching the 'right person' in the hierarchy of Papua New Guinea officialdom, and after receiving his invitation to work in the Western Province, and the camps, other authorities agreed to issue permits.

Representatives of government departments were helpful; people were willing to be interviewed, or offered to brief me, and often introduced me to other pertinent contacts or notified me of the correct officials to approach in the field. In most of these discussions important points not always available in official statements or publications were put forward; a wide variety of experience, strategies and opinions gave me a most useful foundation on which to complete plans for my fieldwork.

It was also made clear that publicity had never been welcomed, and never would be welcome. For this reason, as far as information gained from government interviews is concerned, I have included only those facts that would be available in the public record.

Travel

Restrictions on visitors travelling to the camps were rigorously implemented. Without official invitations and permits it was impossible to visit the camps and outsiders turning up after arriving by unconventional routes have been escorted back to the airport at Kiunga and thence out of the country, sometimes with a sojourn in gaol in Port Moresby, and accompanying international publicity.

Once in the camp however, restrictions were minimal. Refugees could visit Kiunga, if they could obtain transport; refugees regularly travelled to the Rimsite (the landing ramp on the Fly River) to assist in the unloading of UN provisions from the rice barges, and women walked long distances from the camp settlements to make gardens in the rainforest. For officials and for myself, our movements were only regulated by the weather and track conditions. It was possible to walk alone, all day

if necessary, with no fear for personal safety, although more than once I was accompanied back in the late afternoon (despite my protestations) by the person I had visited; this was more from good manners - doing the right thing - than from a real concern for my safety on the long walk.

Despite the difficulty in obtaining permits to work in Papua New Guinea, once there, especially in the Western Province, I was fortunate that the people to whom I spoke were welcoming - many of the refugees wanted to speak to someone from the outside world - a world they felt had forgotten them and was passing them by. In this respect my fieldwork did not have the stresses that sometimes come with attempting to forge ties or acceptance, nor did I come up against the antagonism sometimes experienced by anthropologists who have been accused by their subjects of exploiting them for 'fame or material gain'! Rather than misinterpreting this interest, the West Papuan refugees I spoke with were happy with the prospect of a window to the outside world.

Logistics

Travelling in the Western Province involved water and road transport, and because of the wet conditions, walking. Within the camps at East Awin, wet conditions meant walking, or getting a foothold on the tractor if an official was heading off on patrol (i.e medical patrol) and the tractor could negotiate the deep rutted mud track. Despite its perilous nature, the track was always used due to the literally impenetrable undergrowth in the rainforest. The East Awin area is often described as 'scrub', a description which gives an erroneous impression of the tall lowland rainforest. However, the densely packed and tangled understorey is an added impediment to movement not always encountered in tropical rainforest areas.

On the track, the depth of the mud was dangerous and often forced a return for several hundred metres to seek new footing, for this reason walking several kilometres often took many hours. I was well warned as an expatriate worker - a tall male - had stepped into such a mudpatch and sunk up to his shoulders; without the frantic efforts of his companions he said he could not have struggled free.

Field accommodation

Although accommodation was in short supply in the camps, the Department of Provincial Affairs instructed me to stay in one of their houses which was supplied for the expatriate medical doctor and nursing sister. The doctor and sister divided their time between medical posts and hospital facilities over a wide region. At some times the three of us were in residence, other times their duties called them to other places. We therefor enjoyed the relative comfort of a small high set house; water could be pumped up for cold showers and the camp generator enabled work to be continued until after dark. Kerosene lamps were then used. Fresh food was purchased at the pre-dawn camp market twice a week; there were plentiful greens and vegetables and sometimes eggs and fresh-water fish and shrimp, and other protein including wild pig, cassowary, and reptiles such as pythons I was not desperately hungry enough to sample.

Most of my work involved walking between camp villages, sometimes 20 kilometres a day, to talk with refugees. As walking was difficult, it was necessary to carry as little as possible, so most interviews were recorded in a notebook. A very compact camera was used; these items were carried in a small netbag *(bilum)*. Water was plentiful at the time due to the heavy rain; bush material dwellings had containers which caught runoff from the plastic sheeting roofing. Boots or walking shoes were often carried for long distances as it was only possible to negotiate the deep mud in bare feet, yet by late afternoon the intense heat and sunlight had dried the surface of the mud to glassy particles making walking on bare feet painful. Most days the rain fell at night and in the morning, although at one point the intensity of the downpour for three consecutive days and nights made any trips impossible.

There was no airstrip at the camp. Helicopters in the far Western Province are used by private enterprise, for mining or logging operators, and would only have been available for mercy flights, weather permitting. The only helicopter that landed at East Awin during my stay had become lost; a newly arrived pilot looking for an oil prospecting camp landed on an afternoon when the clouds appeared to be resting on top of the tall forest, to ask for assistance. While I was waiting at Kiunga for contact with the camp to be established to coordinate travel arrangements, I was offered a lift by a local businessman to fly in 'when the weather cleared'. However during this time the camp doctor arrived back in Kiunga and the UN canoe, summoned by 2-way

radio, arrived to transport us up the Fly River to the landing ramp, the Rimsite, 40 kilometres across country.

The road from the Rimsite, which had been a passable track when the site for the camp was chosen, was almost untrafficable at this time due to the roadworks which had turned it into a wide river of red mud. Eventually, after camping by the river bank, a truck (the first that had managed to get through) arrived and we were driven into the camp area. Weeks later, the road was again closed when I wanted to leave the camp; the doctor had almost convinced me that we could walk 40 kilometres when a dry day encouraged a truck driver to attempt the journey. Although we were stopped 20 kilometres from the river by a Papua New Guinea road gang who had just breached a gully with felled saplings and mud and did not want a vehicle to endanger the incomplete work, the presence of a sick refugee woman and her two seriously ill babies convinced the Papua New Guinean overseer to let us pass over the section.

After a canoe trip and back in Kiunga, the only hazards were the huge speeding trucks descending from the Ok Tedi mine to the loading wharf on the Fly River; walking to the Montfort Mission headquarters outside the town meant quickly vacating the road for the bush whenever a truck careered into sight. A short stay in Kiunga allowed me to get my notes in order and again visit the Montfort Mission for further discussions with the women who had attempted to assist the refugees marketing their wares and organised by barter the supply of precious plastic containers and garden implements. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Port Moresby had expressed an interest in developing projects that would involve refugee women and part of my brief was to investigate the feasibility of such schemes. The results of this preliminary study appear in greater detail in the report of my visit to the camps (Sands 1990).

Visiting the airstrip to check the possibility of a seat on a light aircraft returning to Daru and Port Moresby, I had the opportunity to talk with members of the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) who were camped in the area following exercises in the border region. Interviews such as these could not have been planned, and further chance had it that the aircraft that was diverted to Kiunga had been

charted by a young woman whose family had been among the first to flee from Irian Jaya (then West New Guinea) shortly before the Indonesian take-over.

Back in Port Moresby, reunited with my interpreter, I was able to continue the investigation into the situation of the refugee community outside the camps. This gradual return to the 'civilised' world of telephones, radio and television, transport and scheduled international aircraft only stressed, for me, the political artifices and consequences of international boundaries and the reality of the long-drawn out period of isolation for the West Papuan refugees in their rainforest seclusion - the irrefutable conclusion that they were destined to a long, long period of waiting.

CHAPTER TWO
MELANESIAN NATIONALISM

West Papuans as Melanesian nationalists: colonialism, neo-colonialism and the media.

> *Of all the menaces to indigenous peoples in the world, few can be as poignant or as urgent as that threatening the one million or so Melanesian people of West Papua. It is possible with legitimacy to talk about genocide elsewhere - the Mayan Indians in Guatemala, the Ache in Paraguay, the Chakma and other tribal peoples in Bangladesh - but even in the context of such violence the destruction of the West Papuan people has few parallels.... Few indigenous peoples have such a clear right to nationhood.*
>
> Julian Burger *Report From The Frontier* (1987: 143)

OBJECTIVES

In 1984, 10,000 to 12,000 West Papuan refugees left Irian Jaya and moved over the border into Papua New Guinea. Reports since then were sporadic and the aim of my study was to visit the refugee camps and see the conditions there; to hear from the refugees why they had fled their homeland and what were their options for the future - continuing residence in the isolated forest camps, resettlement within Papua New Guinea, or repatriation to Irian Jaya. This refugee existence was to be studied against a background of their struggles as a Fourth World people resisting forced incorporation into the Indonesian nation-state.

The strategic importance of the islands of the Indonesian archipelago has been noted (Harries 1989; Southwood and Flanagan 1983; Simon 1983; Stockwell 1993); the island of New Guinea is the geographical centre of the southern Asian-Pacific region. The state of the Papua New Guinea economy and the impact of mining are discussed as the poor state of the economy and its ramifications on social unrest, disorder and secessionist movements have been linked to Indonesian threats of intervention (Suharto reported in *Post Courier* 26 October 1976; Murdoch *The Age* 26 July 1990). In Bougainville, development of a secessionist movement and escalation of conflict through the late 1980s have been linked to resource development (Connell 1991: 3). The extent of the breakdown of law and order in Papua New Guinea places it at risk from internal movements of insurrection and rebellion (see Ashton 1990).

The independent countries of Melanesia - Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji - are fragmented due to linguistic and cultural variations and are all multi-island countries where secessionist threats have been significant (Connell and Curtain 1982: 461). With the exception of Papua New Guinea, these independent countries will not be included in this study; nor will the other nationalist separatist movements within Indonesia. The major focus will be the refugees from Irian Jaya, or West Papua as it is known to its indigenous inhabitants, and the invasion and continuing military repression in Irian Jaya and East Timor will be briefly examined. Robie (1989: 41) described the 'forgotten wars' that persist in these countries:

> *On the other side of the Pacific from Tahiti, on the fringe of western Melanesia, anti-colonial struggles faced brutal military repression and genocide. Here nationalist movements were not pitted against European colonial powers; instead they faced an Asian country, Indonesia, which, ironically, had itself gained independence only by protracted struggle. But for the peoples of East Timor and West Papua the difference was academic, and their struggles became the 'forgotten wars' as the Western world turned its back, thus seeming to condone the excesses of the Indonesian military.*

Connell (1988: 230) compares the struggle in Irian Jaya with that in New Caledonia:

> *to the west in Irian Jaya fragmented independence movements have waged a liberation struggle against the Indonesian state, but without any real prospects of gaining independence. Thus, at both ends of the chain of Melanesian islands, the most violent independence struggles have been waged in contexts where independence seems least likely.*

Despite this comment, the persistence of Fourth World peoples in opposing the state and retaining cultural integrity for lengthy periods - generations - is a factor in their survival and Connell (1991: 3), suggests a criticism of the negative definition of Fourth World peoples as captive native peoples within the developed First World and developing Third World, referring instead to their own more positive and empowering sense of indigenous identity.

The indigenous Melanesian West Papuans stress their cultural and 'racial' differences in their opposition to incorporation into the Asian Indonesian state, maintaining beliefs which reinforce their commitment to self-determination, despite the repressive nature of the Indonesian military government. West New Guinea, following the 1969 'Act of Free Choice' *(Perpera)* which ended the United Nations Temporary

Executive Authority (UNTEA) after the Dutch relinquished their former colony, became part of Indonesia and was renamed 'Irian Jaya' (Irian victorious). Within Irian Jaya, Melanesian nationalists actively resisted the authority of the Indonesian government and the validity of the Act which became known as the 'the act of no choice', or 'an act free of choice' (May 1986: vi). West Papuans continue to strongly assert their Melanesian identity that is to them a physical and cultural reality. Definitions of Melanesia vary, both in its physical and cultural boundaries. In Irian Jaya self-definition as Melanesian has been forced by opposition and colonial domination; as Gellner (1965: 160) asserts:

> Men not in general become nationalists from sentiment or sentimentality, atavist or not, well-based or myth-founded; they become nationalists through genuine, objective, practical necessity, however obscurely recognised.

West Papuan refugees claim a culturally based nationalism, strongly integrated with Christianity, with no adherence to mainstream political ideology of the left or right. A form of Melanesian socialism has been described as emanating from Papua New Guinea where a radical challenge against colonial authorities was mounted for independence in the early 1970s (Premdas 1987: 43); the ideology of the Papua New Guinea nationalists was represented by the term 'the Melanesian way' and its chief proponents were Bernard Narokobi and Fr. John Momis (see Narokobi 1983). According to Premdas (1987: 42), the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) was the 'hot-bed' of anti-colonial radicalism in the South-west Pacific at the time, influenced by a contingent of expatriate lecturers with experience in Tanzania. Many future Pacific Melanesian leaders took away with them the tenets of Melanesian Socialism - Christianity, the nationalist ideology of 'the Melanesian way', and the Tanzanian factor. In the event, Papua New Guinea acceded to independence without a revolution. Without a struggle against the colonisers, the young educated 'future leaders' filled the government and political positions vacated by expatriates; some idealists survived the first years of independence, at least for as long as they were in government opposition. Following the 1984-85 Papua New Guinea/Irian Jaya border problems, differences of approach to the border problem that existed between government and opposition in parliament were seen as essentially differences of degree

- *'whether a group is in office or not'* (May 1986: 153). Momis and the Melanesian Alliance however, maintained a consistent line in or out of office, opposing repatriation of West Papuan refugees and urging the government to resettle them (May 1986: 153).

Since the 1960s and during this period of rapid growth and intellectual awareness in Papua New Guinea, Irian Jaya was increasingly cut-off from the outside world. Its position was unique; the transfer of sovereignty to Indonesia in 1962 was a separate act bearing little relationship to the out-come of the war for Indonesian independence, proclaimed in 1945. Members of the West Papuan elite, established earlier than a similar elite formed in Papua New Guinea in the 1970s, were aware of their alienation from Indonesian historical processes and the vacillation and confusion that had marked the negotiations to decide the fate of West New Guinea. The Netherlands and Australian joint policy statement on New Guinea issued in November 1957, stressing the recognition of ethnological and geographical affinity as a basis for future co-operation in policy and development, and the stand of neutrality of the United States of America, at this time, (Bone 1958: 155-162) did not assist in clarifying the matter.

> *Considering its importance the dispute between Indonesia and the Netherlands over Western New Guinea (Irian Barat) has received little scholarly attention. Highly tendentious treatment has characterized most writing concerning the issue, those who would seek a full and unvarnished account have been little instructed* (Kahin 1958: iii)

In much of the work relating to the integration of the Indonesian nation the Irian Jaya situation is not included. This lack of interest suggests that the problem of Irian Jaya has always been peripheral to mainstream Indonesian and overseas Indonesianist interests, despite Sukarno's decision to capitalise on parliamentary immobilism and inability to resolve major problems by seizing the unresolved foreign policy question of the post-revolutionary period - *'the "return" of West Irian (Dutch New Guinea) to Indonesian control'* (Liddle 1970: 70).

This symbol of 'incomplete nationhood' (Legge 1972: 239) represented the completion of Sukarno's struggle for an independent and undivided nation, but remained a continuing problem of regionalism. This 'problem of regionalism' has been defined by Coleman and Rosberg as two dimensional: political integration which refers to the lessening of the elite/mass gap, and territorial integration, which acknowledges

the problems of regional and cultural tensions as a separate entity (1964: 9). This latter dimension applies to the resistance to incorporation by West Papua nationalists of the New Guinea/Irian Jaya territory.

Much of the Indonesianist literature on ethno-nationalism is concerned with formation of the new state, integration, the internal workings of the new state particularly economic, social and political change; specific reference to the unique situation of the later incorporation of West New Guinea is not central to most of this work (Geertz 1963; Gellner 1965; Feith 1976; Legge 1972, 1988; Liddle 1970; Shils 1963). The elite/mass gap which has been noted as an important factor of integration in new states (Geertz 1963; H. Geertz 1963; Feith 1976; Liddle 1970; Shils 1963) is not a major force in West Papuan resistance; West Papuans are rejecting the incorporation of their country into an alien state. All 'Asian' immigrants or military officials are marked by their 'racial' differences and all occupy positions of power, whether political or economic, in relation to the indigenous people. West Papuans now comprise another lower level of the 'mass' and this confirms their position as a Fourth World people. As the Indonesian villagers cannot see themselves as belonging to the same society as their own elite class (Liddle 1970: 7), all West Papuans are alienated from all levels of Indonesian society.

While the resistance of West Papuans in Irian Jaya against the Indonesians has been organised to some extent by members of the old West Papuan educated elite, the movement as a whole is sustained by cultural imperatives - myths, symbols, beliefs - and the interference by the Indonesian military in all facets of life: in forced land acquisition, slave labour, repressive laws - literally a reign of terror that has touched even the most isolated rural families. Indonesian military operations have '*been sometimes accompanied by abuses in which ordinary villagers have been killed or wounded, their villages and crops destroyed and their daughters raped*' (Crouch 1986: 11). Women and children have been forced by events into the resistance, making it a movement of the people. In common with the ideology of Melanesian socialism, Christianity is a basis of resistance and ideology.

Many new nations have continued to exist under neo-colonial ruling elites: replacement states and elites continuing the old economic role in the world capitalist system - the old colonial regime replaced by the neo-colonial state (Feith 1976). The

situation of small nations incorporated into new nation-states, as in the Indonesia/Irian Jaya case, creates a new internal colonial subjugation eclipsing the more general problem of elite/mass separation which occurs in an ethnically homogenous society. Asserting their national character, separate geographical territory, culture and ethnic identity as part of the struggle for self-determination, West Papuans exist as a Fourth World people who continue to resist incorporation and occupation by Indonesia. For this reason they identify with the Melanesians of the western Pacific who have attained independence or still wait for self-determination.

Although the study and classification of resistance as an aspect of the morphology of colonialism is well developed, and a sophisticated framework for analysis was constructed by workers in the African context, according to Hempenstall and Rutherford, there has been an absence of a theoretical perspective in the Pacific region (Hempenstall and Rutherford 1984). Much of the literature on Indonesian national integration ignores or only considers Irian Jaya in the context of Sukarno's quest to complete de-colonisation. Resistance has continued with Indonesia publicly denying the strength of the West Papuan fighting force, but maintaining a military presence including elite *Kostrad* troops on the border (Crouch 1986: 7; Osborne 1985: 98).

'History hangs heavily over PNG. Not its own, but Africa's'. Discussing the prospects for national unity in Papua New Guinea, Suter (1977: 17,19) made the point that the most immediate problems were Bougainville - like the Congo's breakaway province Katanga, it was copper-rich - and Indonesia whose inability to subdue the long-running rebellion in Irian Jaya would be a source of future trouble (Suter 1977: 19). Irian Jaya is not a 'breakaway' province due to the fact that it was not handed over to Indonesia at independence and has not ceased to protest incorporation. Bougainville attempted secession from Papua New Guinea before independence but the new government subdued the movement by low-key reaction to sometimes forceful opposition (Connell 1991: 56-57).

Indonesia is a contiguous territory (Liddle 1970: 5), but Irian Jaya is distinct from other regions of the archipelago, being one half of the Melanesian island of New Guinea. Liddle contends that Indonesia is not 'racially' divided, excepting minority communities of Chinese, Indians and others (1970: 5). While biological 'races' in

humankind do not exist, the term is commonly used to describe the main separate physical groupings and Asians and Melanesians do not belong to one 'race'.

The concepts of nationalism, resistance, race, ethnicity and class as applied to the Pacific situation have been examined by Guiart (1957), Mamak and Ali (1979) and Douglas (1980). Dornoy (1984), Spencer (1988), Spencer, Ward and Connell (1988) and Connell (1987, 1988) have written more recently on historical and political aspects of New Caledonia (Kanaky); Connell and Curtain (1982), Connell (1990), Connell (1991), Connell and Howitt (1991) on mining, indigenous people and nationalism in Bougainville.

Literature concerning indigenous people and independence struggles in the Pacific exists in the French language (Henningham 1988: 168). Henningham notes that the work of both Connell (1987) and Spencer (1988) concentrates more on comparisons with the other countries of Melanesia and French overseas possessions than on comparison with the other settler colonies of the South Pacific with disadvantaged indigenous peoples - Australia and New Zealand.

Nelson (cited by Hempenstall and Rutherford 1984: 2) has stressed that conflicts between indigenous local groups have been ignored, but in the Pacific they were often important; the Bougainville conflict is an example. In the context of Melanesian nationalism, although Bougainville has been presented in the media basically as an economic disaster for Papua New Guinea, the secessionist aspects which pre-dated mining have been argued since they were first articulated (Connell 1990, 1991; Griffin 1975, 1982, 1990; Hannett 1975). Following the Papua New Guinea military action since 1988, media reports of brutality toward the general population, Papua New Guinea government blockades, and inaction and censorship from the Australian government, interest, such as it was, centred on this indiscriminate killing, and death rates resulting from the lack of medical supplies.

> *as tragedy ground inexorably towards its climax, Australian and world-wide interest was at most fitful, limited to the extent of Australian connection, rather than imaginatively extending itself to the actual causes and conditions peculiar to the island* (Lafitte 1991: 62).

The secessionist aspect of the crisis has prompted Indonesia to threaten the Papua New Guinea government with intervention - civil unrest in Papua New Guinea excites disquiet in Jakarta (Ashton and Williams 1990: 52). General Murdani, requesting

Australian assistance to crush the rebellion, said that *'It would not be healthy for the region if Bougainville was allowed to secede' (Post Courier* 27 July 1990).

As noted above, the literature on nationalism, and integration of the new state, particularly relating to Indonesia, has often ignored the complexities of the Irian Jaya situation. Specific work relating to the situation in Irian Jaya has been sharply dichotomised; from an Australian perspective writers have taken opposing sides - Indonesian or Melanesian. Much of the 'Indonesianist' literature has been strongly defensive (Arndt 1986; Mackie 1979; Whitlam 1980) in academic journals, and propaganda in the popular press (Nason quoting Woolcott 1993: 2). The Indonesianists blame an unspecified 'anti-Indonesia' lobby for any publicity not favourable to Indonesia's interests (Nason quoting Woolcott 1993: 2), while writers who deplore Indonesia's human rights record and militarism accuse the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and some academics of *'collaborating in a Jakarta propaganda campaign'* (McQueen 1993: 22).

Dutch scholars have written about West New Guinea from colonial times, including official government statements from 1954, and documented the process of decolonisation and the Indonesian annexation. Official government reports and analyses were issued by all the concerned parties at the time and the UN (1963) issued a statement detailing the activities of the UNTEA; van der Veur (1963, 1966) and van der Kroef (1958, 1968, 1970) examined the process and prospects for the continuation of the resistance movement and van der Kroef (1971) integration in Indonesia generally. Werthein (1966, 1987) wrote about integration and fragmentation of the Indonesian state.

Bone (1958) saw the importance of the inner dynamics of 'the question of West Irian' - an area that acquired symbolic value because it embodied aspects of the colonial-anti-colonial dichotomy that divided the Afro-Asian nations and the Western colonial powers, and Indonesia's insistence on applying its claims as successor state. Lijphart (1966) examined the de-colonisation of West New Guinea from a perspective that stressed emotional attachments over economic interest. Bachtiar (1974) looked at integration and disintegration with particular reference to West Irian. Roosman's (1978) article attempted to justify and idealise life after the Indonesian take-over and Jouwe (1978) responded by setting out the facts of life in Irian Jaya from a West

Papuan viewpoint. Most writings by West Papuans have taken the form of papers, reports or letters sent to overseas organisations (Rumakiek 1986, Ireeuw and Ireeuw 1988, Rumbewas 1990), occasionally published (Rumbiak 1985; Rumakiek and Sharp 1986) and political statements often stored in library collections; West Papuans living in Irian Jaya or the refugee camps have little chance of access to either official publications or the media.

Verrier (1975a, 1975b, 1986) examined Australia's position on the issue, the history to 1969, and events following the take-over. Feith and Mackie (1962) and Feith (1964) commented on the West Irian situation during the period under the UNTEA. Further published work involved the general problems of integration, politics and neo-colonialism in Southeast Asia including Indonesia (Feith 1965, 1976, 1987). Feith's analysis, drawing on dependency theory, has suggested that repression and the widening gap between the ruling elite and the masses could lead to a middle-class organised rebellion against the state, however the impact of organised rebellion in Irian Jaya would be lessened by its isolation from the central government in Java. The actions of the OPM remain a source of disruption, internally, and force continuing disharmony with Papua New Guinea over the international border.

The Rule of the Sword. The Story of West Irian (Sharp 1977a) brought to public attention a situation most people had forgotten, after the news reports of the Indonesian invasion in the early 1960s. Sharp's analysis presented possibilities of a resolution for the West Papuan people by their sustained resistance, a view most West Papuans endorse, and since Indonesian incorporation her work has continued (1975, 1977b, 1982, 1989). Savage (1978a, 1978b) examined the nationalist movement and divisions in it, which despite the history of factionalism, have not destroyed it. Mortimer's work has drawn attention to Indonesia's potential instability, and the interest of the Indonesian rulers in the stability (or otherwise) of Papua New Guinea. Although he considered that disorder in Papua New Guinea could hinder good relations between the two countries, Mortimer did not consider that a popular revolution would arise within Indonesia as an issue of class structure (1969, 1973a, 1976). The appropriation of wealth by the elite, usually the military elite, facilitated underdevelopment and maintained patron/client arrangements that over-rode class structure. Again the position of the West Papuan resistance is unique; while the OPM can force the continuation of a strong Indonesian military presence in Irian Jaya, a

'rebellion' contained by geographical remoteness could have little effect on the central government in Java unless the Indonesian state was under threat from other internal sources.

Mackie's work attempts an interpretation of Indonesia and Indonesian actions (Legge and Feith 1989), for instance Mackie (1979) deliberated on Indonesia's *'expansionist designs on Papua New Guinea'* explaining that his study of the causes of *konfrontasi* (the 'confrontation' of Malaysia in 1963-66), resulted in his finding *'this theory utterly erroneous and irrelevant'* (Mackie 1979: 44). *'Even less, in my opinion, can the campaign to incorporate East Timor be categorised or explained as simply a manifestation of expansionist appetites'* (Mackie 1979: 50). While noting that *'Indonesian motivations in that unhappy affair are murky and complex'* Mackie concluded that *'to claim that Indonesia's attitude towards Timor was a grasping and covetous one seems to me, in the light of these circumstances, quite misleading.'* The Irian Jaya claim was *'an undeniably aggressive, confrontative political strategy for putting pressure on the Dutch'* but nevertheless *'it would be inappropriate to say that 'expansionism' was a factor in the campaign'* (Mackie 1979: 47). Mackie's conservative approach demonstrates a belief in the powers of government to impose beneficial government from above - that 'development' and order will benefit the masses more than allowing a participatory political process. This view must place orderly incorporation of West New Guinea into Indonesian Irian Jaya ahead of self-determination for the West Papuan people; in the context of development it has little application to the situation of Irian Jaya where 'development', if it could be shown to have occurred, has not benefitted the indigenous West Papuans.

May (1975, 1979, 1980, 1982, 1988, 1991) examined micronationalism, including border issues and West Papuan nationalism; *Between Two Nations* (1986) covered a wide spectrum of Irian Jaya/Papua New Guinea issues. Premdas (1979, 1985, 1987) has written about nationalism in the Southwest Pacific, Papua New Guinea/Indonesia relations and border problems. Books published during this period included those by Budiardjo and Liem Soei Liong (1988) and Osborne (1985a); articles by Blaskett (1986), Blaskett and Wong (1989) and Harris and Brown (1985). Recent books that include chapters on the Papua Guinea/Indonesian situation include Robie (1989), Dorney (1990), and May in de Silva and May (1991). Among recent work relating more specifically to the problems of refugees in Papua New Guinea are published and

unpublished papers and reports by Jones (1985), Chittleborough and Hardy (1985), Anon/Austcare (1988), Aditjondro (1987), Preston (1988a and 1988b), Rakova (1988), Smith and Hewison (1986), Smith (1988) and Sands (1990, 1991).

Works on the environment, prehistory and land change including transmigration and mining, in Irian Jaya, date from Dutch colonial times and more recently include Aditjondro (1989), Arndt (1986), Colchester (1986a, 1986b, 1986c, 1987), Donner (1987), Hogan (1992a, 1992b), Hyndman (1988, 1991a, 1991b) and Otten (1986a, 1986b). Papers investigating medical problems of West Papuans particularly those diseases likely to be carried over into Papua New Guinea include those by Tumada *et al* (1973), Gajdusek (1978), Gunawan *et al* (1978), Subianto *et al* (1978), Coker-Vann *et al* (1981), Desowitz (1981), Bending *et al* (1983), Hyndman (1987), and Barnish (1984, 1985). Health status of the refugees has been reported by Musoke-Bukenya (1988), and Gau (1985a, 1985b).

There have been some important articles in the newsprint media and journalists have also published in books and academic journals (Hastings 1965, 1973, 1976a, 1976b, 1979, 1980, 1986; Monbiot 1989; Dorney 1990; Osborne 1984, 1985a, 1985b, 1985c, 1986b, 1986c). Differing viewpoints have been presented in the media, sometimes overtly antagonistic to each other; those openly sympathetic to the West Papuan cause, and those supporting a more pragmatic pro-Indonesian viewpoint. Dunn (1983: 383), noted the considerable number of apologists for Indonesia in Australia; many of these, like former ambassadors to Indonesia Sir Keith Shann and Mr Tom Critchley were entrenched in high-ranking diplomatic or government positions, others, like Professor Heinz Arndt (now retired) and Dr Peter McCawley of the ANU's Centre for Indonesian Economic Studies were academics who took a public position in their defense of Indonesian actions (although McCawley was a signatory to the protest letter of May 1984 regarding the murder of West Papuan nationalist Arnold Ap). Commentators B.A. Santamaria *(Weekend Australian* 22-23 June 1991 p.28) and the late Peter Hastings have not always followed a consistent line in their writing although Hasting's pragmatism was often been balanced by his personal experience and clear-sighted view of Indonesian actions (Hastings 1973, 1980).

Hasting's early work has demonstrated a sympathy for the indigenous people, as in his empathic and mournful account of the 'celebrations' in Manokwari, Irian Jaya

following the Act of Free Choice (1973: 222-225); his later writings more often followed the Australian government line. In 1979 he presented a brief historical perspective, noting that the record of official Indonesian statements on Papua New Guinea *'reveals nothing in the way of territorial ambitions'* and stresses that Jakarta-PNG relations *'have been good'* (Hastings 1979: 5) and noting that *'it is very much In Papua New Guinea's interests to help as far as possible Irian Jaya's peaceful absorption into the Republic'* (Hastings 1979: 10).

As Dunn noted (1983: 381), the lines of argument of Arndt, Hastings, Whitlam and Santamaria have been remarkably similar. Santamaria, long ensconced as the self-appointed spokesman for the conservative right in Australia, was the president of the National Civic Council (NCC). The NCC had close links with Ali Murtopo's Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Indonesia, an academic front organisation which had worked closely with both Bakin and Special Operations (OPSUS), intelligence and security agencies (Dunn 1983: 109).

Richard Woolcott was head of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs until February 1992 (Devine 1992: 31). During the years of the East Timor take-over, while Ambassador to Indonesia, he pressed to have Radio Australia moderate its coverage of the war to minimise offence to the Indonesian government. As Hodge (1991: 111) noted, Woolcott's policy was notable for its emphasis on appeasing Indonesia; in August 1975, Woolcott wrote:

> *I know I am recommending a pragmatic rather than a principled stand but this is what national interest and foreign policy is all about.*

The mainstream media in Australia has often ignored events in Irian Jaya. The Papua New Guinea print media has maintained a reasonably consistent supply of news stories and features (see May 1986: 157). Some of these have been presented in a sensationalist manner, drawing attention to scandals or allegations of events or proposals the government would prefer kept silent. The Catholic/Anglican/Lutheran church backed weekly *Times of Papua New Guinea* has regularly published articles sympathetic to Melanesians and particularly to refugees. The editorial policy of *The Times* is unusually out-spoken in its criticisms of treatment of refugees; it is also critical of corruption in government, corrupt politicians and treatment of women, and women's issues, especially in rural areas. Despite the Papua New Guinea government

policy of appeasing its neighbour and some attempts to control information (Hastings 1989: 6), the press in Papua New Guinea has a good record as a free press.

Papua New Guinea and Irian Jaya - The View from Australia

The border problem, refugees and Indonesian/Papua New Guinea relations generally are not isolated from the internal situation in Papua New Guinea. Internal and social unrest and the handling of the Papua Besena and Bougainville secessionist movements have drawn warnings of intervention by Indonesia (Suharto quoted in *Post Courier* 26 October 1976; Murdani quoted in *Post Courier* 27 July 1990).

The Bougainville crisis has had a major impact on the economy of Papua New Guinea, an economy which has in any case failed for a great number of the citizens and has been implicated in the rise of crime and social disorder, attracting Indonesian requests for intervention by Australia (Murdani quoted in *Post Courier* 27 July 1990). The designation of the term 'triangle' in recent literature (Maclellan 1990), in reference to the three countries Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Australia, is apt; Australia has not resolved its position in the region.

The people of New Guinea, both east and west, are Melanesians, and the appeal of West Papuans is to Melanesian nationalism in the Melanesian Southwest Pacific. Despite Australia's historical and nostalgic attachment to Europe, a long overdue awakening to its position in the Asian-Pacific may be in process. Australia's lack of interest in events in the Pacific generally has been noted by Ashton (1990); Hill (1990) and Callick (1990). According to Hill, this massive display of indifference and non-communication is puzzling when even those who take interest in political developments in other parts of the world demonstrate a blind spot when it comes to our own region.

Hill refers to Sylvia Lawson's article in *Australian Society* December 1989, where Lawson suggests that journalists are rarely instructed to report events that do not matter to Reuters and AAP (press agencies); TV networks show what overseas agencies send them ...*'its still their agenda, not ours, we let them map the globe for us'* (Hill 1990: 18). Hill sees this as the old cultural cringe and representative of a failure of inventiveness and creativity on the part of Australian media executives, in addition to technological and economic realities. Australians are not aware of either

their political or geographical arena. She cites the experience of John Connell who asked his first-year geography students at Sydney University to name the countries on a blank map of the Pacific. Few could identify any countries apart from Papua New Guinea, Fiji and New Caledonia and there were some island states that none in the class recognised (Hill 1990: 18).

After 30 years visiting and reporting on events in Papua New Guinea, Chris Ashton in a paper commissioned by the Pacific Security Research Institute, also stated that the Australian media:

> *in thrall to British and US TV networks for overseas coverage, give more importance to central America, the Middle East and the Soviet Bloc than to the South Pacific. Important as these events are, their direct impact on Australia, and Australia's capacity to influence them, is negligible. By contrast, political turbulence in PNG bears directly on Australia's own security interests, and Australia is a central player in the economies of PNG and other South Pacific island states and territories* (Ashton 1990, 29).

Rowan Callick, commenting on the government sponsored report of economist Ross Garnaut in which Australia is urged to refocus its cultural, educational, financial, technological and economic attention towards Northeast Asia, questions the impact of this strategy on the Australian public:

> *What would this mean in the case of Papua New Guinea? In strategic and financial terms, a great deal. But in terms of the Australian public perception, next to nothing. For PNG is already virtually invisible; seeing through it to the El Dorado of North-East Asia merely requires some fine-tuning of the telescope* (Callick 1990: 31).

To state the fact that Papua New Guinea is two kilometres away from Australia, as does Callick (1990: 31), and Indonesia not much further, elicits disbelief. Former Australian army Major, now Professor Peter Young (ABC Radio 22 February 1994) discussing the re-arming of Asian nations, stated that Papua New Guinea *'ticking away like a time-bomb'* is of massive strategic importance to Australia, yet we choose to ignore it - it is too big a military problem. He claimed that Australian diplomatic restraint regarding regional strategy is at odds with Defence force attitudes.

The opportunity to gain political influence in the region has steadily retreated since Australia ignored the possibility of intervention in the situation in East Timor. From 1978, *'the Australian government openly condoned the Indonesian invasion of East Timor, assuming the role of accomplice by rallying to Indonesia's defence in the*

Parliament, and in international forums, whenever allegations of Indonesia's harsh occupation policies were made' (Dunn 1983: 378). While the Timorese people were being forced to submit to Indonesian rule, Australia was vociferously demanding an end to acts of aggression or oppression in Poland, Afghanistan, South Africa and Cambodia (Dunn 1983: 379).

East Timor, after its neglect by the Australian government and subsequent disinterest of the Australian community, has experienced the largest war anywhere in the world, with the exception of the war in Cambodia, since Vietnam. The Dili massacre of November 1991, witnessed by outsiders, forced an episode of Indonesian brutality in East Timor into the mainstream media. Events in Irian Jaya are still hidden from the outside world by Indonesian restrictions on travellers and foreign journalists, and the complicity of governments that avoid confrontation or deny facts. In 1985, Australian newspapers presented analyses of foreign policy issues and concurred that the Papua New Guinea/Irian Jaya border was the Hawke Labor government's most pressing problem (Osborne 1985a: 192).

However the matter that demanded Australia's immediate attention was the other Melanesian liberation fight in New Caledonia. As Osborne stated (1985a: 192), the Australian government was willing to risk the anger of the colonial power, France, to make a stand for the rights of the indigenous Melanesians. The danger for Australia however, was that an autonomous Kanak state would be a certain source of support for the West Papuan cause. This outcome did not eventuate at that time; while the attention of the media remained on New Caledonia, the West Papuan refugees camped along the Papua New Guinea border, forgotten by the outside world and at the beginning of their long, idle exile (Osborne 1985a: 192).

If the importance of Papua New Guinea to Australia remains misted over in the media mirror in which states see themselves and others (Callick 1990: 31), the activities of the OPM and the refugees in Papua New Guinea are blotted out entirely. Yet despite denials of the existence of a problem with Indonesia by security forces and strategists, the sensitive relations between Indonesia and Papua New Guinea are concentrated on the border problem. The resurgence of OPM activity since 1990 is a sign to the outside world that the West Papuan people are maintaining the resistance

that impels Indonesia, thirty years after annexation, to keep its army engaged in warfare against a people who refuse to acquiesce to aggression.

Repression and media censorship continue in Indonesia; outside of Indonesia, the 'free' media is inhibited by the dominant ideology of international trade and alliances and commercial interests but remains a source of information and a forum for debate. In this chapter I have shown that the attitude of the media in an open society both mirrors public perceptions and guides them. Academic debate also reaches the public arena, as 'apologia' for Indonesia which draws comment (see the McCawley/Osborne debate in *The Age* July 1985; McQueen in *The Australian* 16-17 October 1993) but rarely concerning Irian Jaya. As Irian Jaya is ignored by mainstream concerns, so the West Papuan refugees in Papua New Guinea are ignored, hidden in their forest isolation.

CHAPTER THREE
RESISTANCE AND IDENTITY

Fourth World Peoples; violence in modern Indonesian history; the organisation of the West Papuan resistance.

West Papuans, as an oppressed indigenous people, are fighting a Fourth World war of resistance against Indonesia (Nietschmann 1987). During 1972, indigenous delegates representing North American and European countries at the UN Environmental Conference in Sweden, adopted the term Fourth World to identify indigenous nation people who are encapsulated within states (Hyndman in press). The term is still being circulated for validation, according to Hyndman, and indigenous peoples are themselves popularising it. Whitaker's *The Fourth World: Victims of Group Oppression* was published in 1972 with some case studies sponsored by the British Minority Rights Group. The study of Fourth World peoples is included in university courses and a growing body of literature, although the term is sometimes misapplied by writers. *The Wall Street Journal*, comparing the relative states of development of Africa, Asia and Latin America, declared Africa 'the fourth world' on the basis of its contention that it was 'degenerating, regressing' (Loudon 1985: 15). While Fourth World people struggle to survive under difficult conditions within many African states, the term does not mean an ultimately impoverished and lawless Third World country.

According to McCall (1980: 542-3), the Fourth World is made up of nations without states, not minorities or ethnic groups but peoples who by residence within or traditional ties to specific territory, lay claim to it. He defined the First World as the superpowers, the Second World the industrial sector serving the First World, the Third World as the underdeveloped dependents of the first two worlds that supply primary resources and the Fourth World as land and labour (McCall 1980: 543).

Nietschmann (1987: 3) has defined:

> *the different geopolitical mappings of the peoples and countries of the world: the first is the common one of 168 international states and their attendant peoples, often described in terms of "Three Worlds"; the second is a quite different one of more than 3,000 enduring peoples and nations that make up the Fourth World of persistent but internationally unrecognised nations.*

Nietschmann identifies the three worlds (as they are generally recognised) as the First World representing the free, economically developed states - United States of America, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand and more recently, Japan; the Second World consisting of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Block states, China, North Korea and Vietnam and the Third World - originally used to indicate neutral, non-aligned states. This concept of the Third World changed with the proliferation of new Asian and African states following wars of 'liberation' and recolonisation since the 1950s, and now refers to economically backward states. The Third World includes most of Africa, South America, southern Asia and the Pacific, most states are derived from former European colonies and claim to be non-aligned; they are non-industrial and dependent (Nietschmann 1987: 3).

> *The Fourth World comprises the nation peoples and their countries that exist beneath the imposed states. Nation peoples consider themselves to be members of distinct nations by virtue of birth and cultural and territorial heritage; they may not consider themselves to be citizens of some intruding state government made up of peoples from other places. Fourth World nations may be surrounded, divided or dismembered by one or more international states. The Fourth World encompasses most of the world's distinct peoples, about a third of the world's population and approximately 50 percent of the land area* (Nietschmann 1987: 3).

The pragmatism of entrenched nation-states, international politics, propaganda and the ensuing world view has meant that most Fourth World peoples are invisible on the world stage. Recent events, such as the environmental and 'greening' movements, to which they are peripheral, have alerted people to the presence of some previously unknown or ignored Fourth World peoples. The Amazonian Indians and the indigenous people of Kalimantan come into this category; the publicity surrounding the destruction of the equatorial rainforest has brought their physical plight to notice, although their rights as original land owners are ignored. The necessity of nation-states to legitimate the movement of others, such as the Inuit and Sami, whose territories spread over international boundaries, has resulted in attention to their rights. In Australia, the granting of rights to indigenous people in the Torres Strait Islands - the Murray Island (Mabo) case - has been influenced by these trends. In the past, Aboriginal people in Australia were ignored and excluded from civil rights; some improvements in education opportunities and a growing awareness and ability to articulate concerns have resulted in some changes. Where Fourth World peoples have

fought actively against the imposed ruling state, mainstream reaction has been to label them 'terrorists' or 'guerillas'.

In situations where the imposed regime is a minority with total economic power - as in South Africa - extreme restrictive measures are applied to control the indigenous population, large numbers of migrant workers brought in and factionalism encouraged with the ruling minority favouring one group against the other. Bodley (1982) demonstrated that cultural imperialism, aggression and exploitation are inherent factors in all modern states regardless of differences of philosophy: in an era when newly independent states are deciding their own fate and others are involved in struggles with the remnants of past colonial powers, Indonesia, with international support, has reduced the indigenous West Papuan people to a state of subjection unsurpassed by 19th century colonial excesses.

The suppression of internal events within Irian Jaya is not an aberration but a continuing reality of military rule. Within Indonesia, the suppression of information includes political dissent, economic facts (for instance the business dealings of the Suharto family and high ranking army officers) censorship relating to massacres and resistance movements, especially in Irian Jaya and East Timor, and major catastrophes. Commenting on the problems in the historiography of the killing of several hundred thousand people in Indonesia - communist party *(Partai Komunis Indonesia*: PKI) members or supporters - following the 1965 coup attempt, Cribb (1990: 1) states that this *'ranks as one of the twentieth century's more extensive mass murders. It is striking however, how little prominence this event has been given in general histories of Indonesia.'* Cribb attempts to explore the deep theoretical problems that lie behind the atrocity, and for its acceptance by Indonesians and Indonesian scholars. The silence was aided by banning of newspapers and lack of official records, but it is difficult to assign to the ideological motive and the feelings of fear, revenge, and adventure such *'gratuitous slaughter, unsophisticated cruelty and unplanned brutality'* (Cribb 1990: 15). While Islam gave an apparently ideological basis for mass killing, and religious teachers in East Java announced holy war, the killings did not fulfil the requirements of *jihad* (1990: 15-16). Cribb accepts that the killings probably drew on traditions of violence which are curtailed by forces of law and order, and once unleashed, had a self-intensifying quality, noting also that the *'distracting paradigm of*

the peaceful Javanese, which is often inflated to become that of the peaceful Indonesian, still hovers over much writing on Indonesia' (Cribb 1990: 31).

> *In most accounts, the killings burst suddenly upon the scene and then are over, having arrived and departed with the rapidity and evanescence of a tropical thunderstorm. Historians of Indonesia seem to have found it difficult to identify both those aspects of Indonesian society might have alerted us to the fact that the killings would take place and any traces they may have left on the present political order* (Cribb 1990:2).

Geographically close as Australia is placed, writings about the massacre are sparse and references to the killings, their scale and ferocity, are almost non-existent. In a short reference to the Coup of 1965, Zainu'ddin (1968) spares only a couple of lines to *'clashes in which a great number of Indonesians were killed. The official and unofficial estimates range from about 87,000 to about 800,000.'* 'Clashes' suggests a more evenly contested armed struggle, in fact it has often been suggested that the victims submitted to death in the swiftness and ferocity of the attack, knowing that the military had urged the slaughter of anyone even remotely associated with the PKI.

Public attitudes towards Indonesian military violence see such violence as irrelevant to the outside world and when criticism is levelled at the regime apologists direct blame at the critic (see for instance Nason 1993: 2). In this emotional tirade, Woolcott's *'stinging comments amounted to an accusation of racism against groups that protested about Indonesia's occupation and policies in East Timor.'* This is a serious slur against individuals and organisations who protest about human rights and suffering of indigenous people under military rule; labelling them 'racist' is emotive and illogical.

Another example of this attitude was made public as early as 1977 when historian James Griffin reviewed Nonie Sharp's seminal account of the Indonesian take-over of Irian Jaya (then West Irian), *The Rule of the Sword* (1977a). The review in *The National Times* (October 17, 1977) attempted to 'blame' the author, Sharp, for what was happening in West Irian. Finding it an impossible task to refute her claims, Griffin levelled his attack on her personally and in a 'blame the messenger' mode, alleged that she welcomed insurgency regardless of loss of human life, and that she had made a call to arms. Sharp responded to the criticisms in an editorial letter to *The National Times*, stating that Griffin's denigratory misrepresentation of her position

would not obscure the truth, and that the logic of his position was that all smaller countries must submit to occupation.

Sharp suggested that this reasoning, if valid for West Irian and East Timor, would presumably apply if Australia or Papua New Guinea were invaded. According to Hill (*The National Times* November 7, 1977) Griffin's view was 'extraordinary' as was his 'ridiculous suggestion' that Sharp and people like her ...

> *who report and document a political struggle against alien rule, are somehow responsible for "inciting" the conflicts which take place.*

Melanesian West Papuans are the first refugees in the Pacific Melanesian region. Most Fourth World refugees in this region are Asians, including small numbers of Fijian Indians who fled to Australia following the Fijian army coups of 1987. The Indonesian take-over of West New Guinea has incorporated the indigenous Melanesian population of a geographically separate landmass - New Guinea - into Asia as 'Irianese', a mythical people created by the Indonesians (Nietschmann 1987). Added to warfare, the Indonesian Transmigration program (Chapter Six) has been the purveyor of ethnocide and the cause of refugees fleeing their homeland.

An Analysis of Categories of Resistance

Resistance sustained by the people, and protest and external movements of support are effective methods of opposition even in the face of expansionism and military might. Ranger (1981, 1985) specified theoretical categories of resistance in the African context. These are primary resistance - frontier warfare, and secondary resistance - millenarian movements and organisations such as trade unions, and ultimately mass nationalist political parties (Hempenstall and Rutherford 1984). These were the movements which resulted in independence for many ex-colonies during the turbulent years of the 1950s and 60s. Overthrowing the shackles of colonialism did not resolve the overwhelming difficulties within the newly-formed state. Contained by the new nationalist government within the existing colonial boundaries, Fourth World people began their struggle for autonomy.

Indigenous peoples are very frequently in conflict with the interests of the state within which they live, and again, in the African context, Young (1983) has examined comparative claims to political sovereignty, in this case those of Katanga, Biafra and

Eritrea. The Charter of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), Article lll, Paragraph 3, affirms ... *respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each State and for its inalienable right to independent existence.* Young (1983, 119) stresses that:

> *in the postcolonial state system in Africa, no principle has been more fundamental than the sanctity of the existing sovereign units, within their current frontiers.*

Anti-colonial nationalism was not based on the notion of cultural affinities, rather a shared condition of oppression and alien rule was the main cause of revolt, and necessitated the shared efforts of all participants in a given framework of subordination. The particular colonial territory was the necessary framework for ousting colonial power, and the colonial entity itself was the defining basis for those to whom self-determination should apply (Young 1983: 200). This territorial integrity norm was rapidly accepted as having precedence over self-determination, as the dangers inherent in the self-determination doctrine were realised by nationalist leaders who foresaw the possibility of segmentation of the new state. As noted above, the symbolic importance of Irian Jaya was exacerbated by its retention by the Dutch at Indonesian independence (Bone 1958, ix).

Integrity of the state, in the Papua New Guinea context, was challenged at independence by attempted secession by Papuans (see Abaijah 1975) and by Bougainvilleans, moves opposed and defeated by the combined forces of the new nationalist leaders and the out-going colonial government of Australia. The Bougainvillean secessionist movement has persisted despite the refusal of the Papua New Guinea government to recognise it as such, and despite the continuing assaults of the PNGDF in the recent conflict.

Nowhere has the doctrine of successor state been more detrimental to an indigenous people than in the case of the West Papuan people. The state of Indonesia includes the territories of people who bear little resemblance ethnically or culturally to their neo-colonial rulers, but the Melanesian inhabitants of the western half of the island of New Guinea are separated by geographical barriers, ethnicity, language and culture. Despite the resistance of the people, the continuing force of the military government holds the state together. According to Young, only the extraordinary conjuncture of a virtual decomposition of the state can open the way for successful

separation; he suggested that dismal economic prospects may provide the opportunity for such crises, noting however that despite the policies of state destruction pursued by many leaders, this had not yet happened (1983: 229). In 1986, Whitlam stated that 'to this day no state will officially condone a process for severing some part of another state. Such a principle would lead to the breakup of such large entities as the USSR ...' (1980: 757).

Since then, the extraordinary has happened in what was the Soviet Union, and one of the superpowers has disintegrated in a blaze of world attention following decades of economic disaster and military repression. Following the years of Indonesian 'confrontation' (1962-65), Mackie suggested that it was difficult to assert that the cessation of the *'assertive, strident aspects of Indonesia's foreign policy during the years of the West Irian and Malaysia confrontations'* (1966: 55) would not revert while the domestic political and economical situation remained precarious. West Papuan resistance fighters, aware of their position against the military strength of Indonesia, believe in the disintegration of the Indonesian state as an article of faith. Feith's suggestion of the effects of the inequality and repression of underdevelopment resulting finally in middle-class revolution against the New Order state is mirrored in the belief of the resistance. As one West Papuan put his argument to me:

> *When the real trouble starts in the middle - in Java - then all the other places will take their chance to step up their resistance and reclaim their lands. When all the army must return from the outside islands, do you think they will care about us here in West Papua?*

The combination of cultural mores - belief, myth, religion - are woven into the West Papuan resistance movement and the practicalities of life as a dispossessed people. While their primary resistance strength as frontline fighters may be limited, their secondary strength - the movement of the people - persists. Without help from outside countries the consistency of their resistance is limited, but their perception of themselves as a separate ethnic group remains strong. The possibility of decomposition of new independent states by economic failure and civil disturbance suggested by Young in 1983, had progressed sufficiently by 1991 to become a factor in post-colonial struggles. With the disintegration of the Soviet Union capturing world headlines, the Bougainville troubles which recommenced in 1988 continued with harsh consequences for the indigenous people and a serious down-spiralling of the economy for Papua New Guinea.

Nationalism and the Creation of the Past

Writing about custom and identity in the contemporary Pacific, Keesing (1989: 19) stated that:

> *Across the Pacific, from Hawai'i to New Caledonia, Aboriginal Australia, Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands, and Papua New Guinea, Pacific peoples are creating pasts, myths of ancestral ways of life that serve as powerful political symbols. In the rhetoric of postcolonial nationalism (and sometimes separatism) and the struggles of indigenous Fourth World peoples, now minorities in their own homelands, visions of the past are being created and evoked.*

While using ideologies of *kastom* (custom) in contemporary Melanesia as illustrations of four variants - mainly in reference to the Solomon Islands but noting that these phenomena have counterparts in Vanuatu and PNG, Keesing goes on to discuss rhetorical appeals to 'The Melanesian Way' (1989: 20). Keesing accepts a pan-Melanesian consciousness (or the rhetoric and reification of such a consciousness) yet despite the introductory reference to 'Fourth World peoples', nowhere in this paper are the Melanesian inhabitants of Irian Jaya mentioned. While the concept of a 'Pacific' cultural area can be accommodated, it appears to the reader that such a notion is inexorably halted by the invisible international boundary that stretches across the mountain ranges and lowland plains of the island of New Guinea. Keesing (1982: 3) foretold this curious premise when he stated that:

> *What, then, of 'Melanesia'? In a broad and loose, geographical sense ... it remains useful. Partly, I suggest, this is because the term is ambiguous. The fuzzy and shifting boundaries of what, in a particular context, is included in ' Melanesia' will serve us well. In a particular context of political, historical or anthropological discourse, we can use it so as to include all of the island of New Guinea (and sometimes islands to the west) or to exclude Irian Jaya.*

I would argue that there is no context in which the indigenous West Papuans of Irian Jaya can be excluded from 'Melanesia', unless it is to accept the claims of Indonesian state propaganda. The arbitrary political boundary is in itself an intrinsic part of the resistance struggle of the Melanesian West Papuan people and a strong component of political unease within Papua New Guinea. Academics, as well as the media who strongly criticise the workings of the Indonesian state, risk the wrath of the sensitive military government and will find it difficult, or impossible, to obtain visas to visit or work there.

Although the West Papuan resistance is not included in Keesing's analysis of custom and resistance, the ideology of those participating in the Fourth World resistance in Irian Jaya strongly supports Keesing's contention: ritualised celebrations of custom, particularly where traditional myths have melded on to the artefacts of colonialism and introduced religion, have become an intrinsic part of resistance. Nowhere is this more strongly illustrated than in the reverence shown to the Morning Star flag, the flag of West Papuan independence. Incidents relating to the flag are documented throughout the history of the West Papuan people, and veneration for its mythical source is closely tied to their Christian beliefs. The star is depicted on the flag, carved and painted on crosses on graves (Fig. 10), on gateposts, houses, and tattooed on to human skin. Raising of the flag in defiance of Indonesian rule has become a focus of dissent resulting in imprisonment, torture, execution and exile.

In comparison with other struggles for self-determination, an important difference in the case of West Papua's war of independence is the secrecy surrounding the workings of the Indonesian state. France, as a colonial power, may be as strongly disinclined to relinquish Pacific Territories, but the relatively more open nature of French government, accessibility of colonial territories and the length of time involved in the growth of the protest movements has allowed discussion of the situation. However, where events became threatening to the objectives of France, violent military action has been used against nationalists, and foreign governments (the *Rainbow Warrior* incident in New Zealand) and strategies of immigration have been implemented to ensure voting patterns sympathetic to French interests.

The concept of the use of the 'creation of the past', which is not argued strongly as an act detrimental to its creators by Keesing (1989), has been used before, and with more dangerous intent, by contemporary anti-Kanak writers. Spencer (1988: 7) reports that at the height of the 1984-85 violence in New Caledonia, the '*widely read and right-wing Figaro-Magazine claimed that, because of the widespread metissage in New Caledonia, Kanak culture was an invention*' (12-18 January 1985: 88). Other articles in the *Figaro* newspaper emphasise the static, neolithic nature of Kankak culture, only given unity by the impact of Christianity (21 November 84: 5) or, again, its non-existence ...

> *if you ask any Kanak in Noumea about Kanak culture, writes the author, Thierry Desjardins, he or she will tell you that "there is no Kanak culture or civilization."*

That some Kanaks deny culture under the weight of French influence and propaganda does not preclude the possibility of its existence. Other Melanesians, like Kanaks, may wish to participate in education or business, retain the trappings of technology and consumerism, but this does not compromise their cultural heritage, their perception of it or their fight for self-determination.

In the context of Pacific protest and dissent, Hempenstall and Rutherford (1984: 3) clearly define the boundaries of their analysis: it does not apply a systematic analysis of Islander protest in terms of class, race, caste or ethnicity.
They use:

> *a network of theoretical concepts about class and race relations and the nature of the colonial system which are implicit rather than explicitly elaborated into a coherent theory about protest. Still less is this a Marxist-Leninist or other form of determinist history seeking to reduce human behaviour to a series of mechanical formulae. On the other hand, what we do hope we are offering is a general history of protest movements in the Pacific during the colonial period, which draws comparisons and tentatively advances some generalisations about forms of islander dissent during the period - their direction, their sophistication, their commitment and their success.*

In relation to resistance by the West Papuan people against Indonesian rule, none of these categories - class, race, caste or ethnicity - is ultimately definitive. West Papuans have constructed an identity as Melanesian nationalists, although they come from regions throughout what is now Irian Jaya as diverse as the central highlands, southern lowlands and off-shore northern islands and therefore conform to 'ethnic groupings' as diverse as those of the Papuan, New Guinean or Northern Solomons regions. In this sense, ethnic categorisation may be a matter of choice; for instance it has been strongly argued by numerous writers that Bougainvilleans, because of their culture, history and physiology are a legitimately separate ethnic group (Nash and Ogan 1990) but not a separate *race*, as Griffin (1975: 34) stressed. In the West Papuan instance equally disparate groups define themselves as one people, ignoring these observable differences and asserting their common destiny.

Although the Bougainvilleans constantly refer to their black skin as a mark of separate identity, in many other contexts physical markers are disregarded. Aboriginal Australians are judged by much of the white community as not legitimate participants in Aboriginal issues if they look 'too white', although other Aborigines accept them.

Defining ethnicity is difficult for many reasons, and West Papuans could be assigned to many discrete ethnic groups; however as Mead noted, the maintenance of diverse identities under conditions of intensive interaction has long been recognised as characteristic of Melanesian societies (Pomponio 1990: 47). Facing the might of a cataclysmic change, such physiological differences became insignificant, and West Papuan nationalists recognised this in their slogans 'One people, one soul' and 'Unity in Diversity' - *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, the same slogan the Indonesians used after independence (Hastings 1973: 206).

Linnekin and Poyer (1990: 11), like Gellner, make the point that ethnic identity is not primordial, but must be seen as emerging under certain historical circumstances. In relation to the external forces that shape such identity, they further state that:

> *In Oceania today we see the metamorphosis of cultural identities into interest groups, organised for action at various political levels. The goals of aboriginal peoples in the Pacific match those of the victims of colonial domination elsewhere in the world: economic security, political sovereignty, civil rights, human dignity, social equality. A form of international structural relativity is at work in the pursuit of these goals: an interest group formed on the basis of cultural identity provides an organisational match for the political structures of domination and a base for alliances with similar movements elsewhere in the Pacific and in the world.*

The concern of their book is the Pacific, yet eastern New Guinea - Papua New Guinea - is included and Irian Jaya excluded, suggesting (as in Keesing's work) that the political boundary with Indonesia effectively shuts off that 'base for alliances' from the Melanesian people of Irian Jaya. The above quotation stresses the isolation of West Papuans, despite their self-ascribed Melanesian cultural identity and their appeals to Melanesian nationalism. West Papuans are desperately lacking a base for alliances with any movements, especially in the Pacific, which, in their alienation from Asia, they look to as their region. Without such a base the invisibility of West Papuans and their cause remains.

Sharp (1977a: 31) wrote of the effect of migration into Irian Jaya and the total economic exclusion of West Papuans as a 'caste barrier' based on racial/ethnic criteria. Migrants from other provinces of Indonesia have dominated the economy since their arrival in the early 1970s pushing out the West Papuans 'Race markers' such as black skin and curly hair are used by the West Papuan people themselves to denote Melanesian identity and separate themselves from those they call the 'straight hairs'.

In reality most West Papuans are not 'black' but they claim this 'race marker' to define themselves as Melanesians.

The ethnic Chinese were a racial minority who were caught in the traumatic decolonisation struggle. Small numbers of Chinese traders who had lived in Dutch New Guinea were among the earliest refugees, crossing the border in the 1950s and early 1960s into Australian New Guinea, as stateless people. The small numbers involved in this early exodus, and their obvious 'racial' difference permitted them to stay in the Australian territory and they were given Australian citizenship (as were all ethnic Chinese in Papua New Guinea) during the term of the 1970s Whitlam Labor government in Australia. Ethnic Chinese who had fled the Indonesian invasion interviewed by me in Papua New Guinea in 1989, stated that they were aware of the impending trauma which they realised could be disastrous; although their families had inter-married with indigenous Melanesians, both as a deliberate ploy to integrate and through choice in their isolated places of residence, the experiences of older family members who had settled in Dutch New Guinea and were alert to world conditions impelled them to leave their established businesses and seek safety (although unknown futures) as aliens in Papua New Guinea.

The indigenous West Papuans were caught in the transition, but saw it optimistically as a chance to rid themselves of the Dutch colonisers on the way to independence. When it became obvious that they were breaking free of the colonial Dutch to be brought under the control of a ruthless neo-colonial military regime, the only action was military resistance which continues to this day and beyond.

The organisation of the West Papuan Military Resistance

Outbreaks of resistance occurred against the Japanese during World War 2 in various parts of West New Guinea, including resurgences of the millenarian, cargo and messianic cults which portrayed rebellion in religious terms. Worsley (1968: 126-145) gives a detailed account of the Mansren creation myth and its various revivals during trade and mission contact in the early nineteenth century. The process which began with the use of an indigenous myth, peacefully opposing colonial and mission control, ended in the creation of well-organised and disciplined bodies using force to drive the foreigners from their land (Worsley 1968: 145).

Hastings (1973), Osborne (1986a) and Dorney (1990) each provide a summary of these events in relation to the formation of the resistance. The Schouten islands, of which Biak is the largest, had become the centre of anti-Dutch sentiment due to the emergence of a messianic movement based on traditional beliefs and fuelled by protest over forced labour since the nineteenth century (Dorney 1990: 10).

The Koreri movement evolved from a legend that predicted freedom for the people brought about by the Lord, Manseren Mangundi. The legend began with the hero figure Manamakeri who had captured the errant Morning Star and in return for releasing him obtained magical powers. In one fire ritual, Manamakeri transformed himself into Manseren (or Mansren), who taught the Koreri doctrine of peaceful living. The people did not live according to the teachings, and Manseren departed, heading over the sea to the west. Towards the end of the nineteenth century a belief arose that if the people pleased him by their devout ways, he would return and implement a heavenly existence on earth (Dorney 1990: 10).

It has been suggested by early observers that the Koreri movement was a manifestation of a self-conscious Papuan nationalism rather than a religion. Koreri policy was to urge Papuans to fly the Dutch tricolour upside down to symbolise reversing the roles of the indigenous people and the colonisers (Dorney 1990: 11). The Papuan flag, created at this time, featured the Morning Star whose magical properties had caused Manseren to achieve divinity. According to Hastings (1973: 202) these activities showed the beginnings of nationalist concepts. In 1989, West Papuan refugees were delighted to see copies of *Beyond The Border* (Wolfers 1988), with the flag of Indonesia printed upside down on the cover. According to informants, this was a deliberate act of sabotage by sympathisers.

The revolt of the Geelvink Islands people was the most obviously nationalistic opposition to Japan and culminated in 1942 in a proclamation of independence and the raising of a national flag featuring the morning star (Osborne 1986: 51). It was believed that the flying of the flag bearing the star would attract supernatural intervention in the fight against foreign invaders. This belief continues, and flag raisings have been the most common form of non-violent protest against Indonesian rule. Reaction to such incidents have been extremely violent, including the 9 February

1984 incident in Jayapura which led to 10,000 West Papuans fleeing Irian Jaya for sanctuary in Papua New Guinea (Dorney 1990: 11).

The flag was described by Hastings (1973: 202):

> *The 1942 flag was the Dutch tricolour reversed, blue, white and red, featuring a white, five-pointed 'morning star of Biak' (involved in the Mansren Myth cargo cults) and a small white cross denoting Christian influence. The 1961 flag also combined the Dutch flag colours - a red third featuring the star of Biak plus six horizontal white stripes for the six West New Guinea district, on a blue field. The cross disappeared.*

From the beginning, the reaction of military occupation forces to independence movements was swift and violent. The fact that such movements have survived 50 years of opposition to technologically sophisticated warfare demonstrates the nationalistic fervour of the West Papuan resistance, and although much attention has been given to the problems of factionalism within the resistance, its lack of weapons and outside support, the fact remains that it has survived despite all odds.

The Dutch program to educate a West Papuan elite, after the Allies ousted Japan and handed West New Guinea back to Holland in 1944, also encouraged a growing political awareness. But some West Papuans still believed that their hopes lay with Indonesia and joined two pro-Indonesia political parties that had been formed by Indonesians who had settled in West New Guinea earlier under the Dutch colonial occupation (Osborne 1986a: 51).

This split in the independence movement was to hamper the cause for many years: the anti-Indonesia forces were led by the New Guinea Unity Movement and another movement, the Christian Workers Union of New Guinea represented West Papuans employed within government ranks. This organisation became *Parna*, the *Partai Nasional* (National party), and its concerns were elitist, reflecting the aims of its founders.

On 1 December 1961, following national elections for the newly-formed New Guinea Council in which twenty-two out of twenty-eight seats were gained by Melanesians despite few real links with village people, and a flag, an anthem and a name - Papua Barat (West Papua) had been chosen, the Morning Star flag was raised beside the Dutch tricolour (Osborne 1986a: 52). This brief moment of glory was to

be swept aside as the Indonesian government accelerated its propaganda and military campaigns, culminating eight months later in the dropping of paratroopers on West Papuan soil.

The history of the nationalist struggle in West New Guinea has been summed up by Savage (1978a: 143), as the misfortunes of the educated petty-bourgeoisie who had attempted to secure contact with foreign forces - the Dutch colonialists, Indonesian colonisers and political exiles, the UNTEA and the Indonesian pre-1969 administration. When all these attempts proved futile, the West Papuan elite finally turned to the masses - the village people - and organised armed struggle.

The name given to the fighting force was OPM - *Organisasi: Papua Merdeka* (Free Papua Movement), and was first reported by journalists at the time of the Act of Free Choice. The title was apparently coined by the Arfak people of the Manokwari region, supporters of exiled leader Markus Kaisiepo (Osborne 1986a: 54). Rather than a specific organisation, the OPM has always been regarded by the people as a popular movement, supported however by several actively involved underground groups. It has been split into two military wings. The 'Biak' or Victoria group, *Tentara Pembebasan Nasional* (TPN, National Liberation Army) was formed by Brigadier General Seth Rumkorem, a Biak islander who served as a second lieutenant and intelligence specialist with the Indonesian army. Its ideology was mainly Christian, and Rumkoren led the group for 12 years until he was forced into exile (Robie 1989: 61).

The other group was *Pemka* (*Pemulihan Keadilan* - Command for the Restoration for Justice). Jacob Prai, a former Cendrawasih University law student arrested for political activity and jailed without charge, escaped and joined the OPM. Prai led *Pemka's* military wing known as Papenal (National Liberation Group) (Robie 1989: 61). In 1971 the Victoria group captured the Waris outpost south of Jayapura and made the 'Numbay to Merauke, Sorong to Baliem, Biak to Adi' declaration of independence which failed to reach the outside world, and the waiting supporters in London, at the appointed time. Despite this failure, and despite the split in the OPM ranks, all West Papuans endorsed the proclamation, as they endorsed the Morning Star flag, the national anthem and the 129 articles of the Provisional Constitution, and have done so ever since (Osborne 1986a: 55).

Despite the denial of their plight by the outside world, the struggle of the West Papuan people persists. The outside ignorance of the situation, and the disinterest in it, has not deterred those most affected. Their determination, and a belief that eventually the internal breakdown of the Indonesian state will occur, sustains their resistance. According to Premdas (1985: 63), the OPM had grown bolder, stronger and acquired international recognition during the early 1980s, emerging as a force threatening vital facilities in Irian Jaya and forcing the Papua New government to treat the border as the foremost issue on the national security agenda. Although the history of factionalism within the resistance movement has been well documented (Dorney 1990; Osborne 1985a, 1986a; May 1986, 1991; Savage 1978a), for most West Papuans the dominant forces of nationalism and anti-Indonesian sentiment over-ride these differences. In exile, solidarity is expressed: 'we are all refugees', as OPM fighters deny an identity separate from the general populace: *'we are all OPM.'*

CHAPTER FOUR

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE ASIAN PACIFIC REGION AND THE INDONESIAN CAMPAIGN FOR WEST NEW GUINEA

Whoever is Lord of Malacca has his hands on the throat of Venice.
15th Century Portuguese, quoted by Southwood and Flanagan (1983:17).

The area occupied by the islands of the Indonesian archipelago and the landmass of New Guinea has been variously designated Southwest Pacific, Indo-Pacific, Melanesian Pacific. Owen Harries, former Australian Ambassador to UNESCO and editor of the Washington DC foreign policy journal *The National Interest*, has noted that his use of the term 'Southwest Pacific' is used to cover Papua New Guinea and the mini - and micro-states of the region, not including Australia and New Zealand (Harries 1989: 25). The fact that the people of West New Guinea were abandoned by the outside world following the Indonesian invasion can be explained by the over-riding importance of Indonesia to the United States.

According to Harries (1989: 15), the insignificance of the Southwest Pacific in world politics through the 1950s and 1960s was a function of two sets of conditions that saw the United States and its allies unchallenged as regional controllers, and the Soviet Union disempowered by lack of effective reach and capacity to challenge that control. The defeat of the United States in the Vietnam war and the internal political disruption in the US, including the impact of the Nixon/Watergate scandal, destroyed the perceived invincibility of the US in the region. Also, with the exception of the French colonies, the 1970s saw the decolonisation of the Pacific with the creation of the new states of Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Tonga, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands, Kiribati and Vanuatu. The new generation of island leaders had no personal memories of the close cooperation with their colonial masters that occurred during the years of the Pacific World War 2 and were aware of prevailing anti-imperialist and neutralist Third World ideologies (Harries 1989: 16).

In the late 1970s the upgrading of the Soviet Union's interest and presence in the Pacific was a significant factor, although its main interest was focused on the Northwest Pacific and Southeast Asia. Most meaningful to the US, the establishment of the Soviet military base at Cam Ranh Bay, later to become the largest base outside of the Warsaw Pact countries, compounded the fact of the Treaty of Friendship concluded in 1979 between Vietnam and the Soviet Union; an agreement to assist Vietnam's impoverished economy and to underwrite its invasions of its neighbours (Harries 1989: 16). The relative economic success of the Soviet Union at this time enabled it to venture further south into the changing Pacific: the emergence of the newly decolonised Pacific states, the vast sea resources they ruled, and the changed political status of Australia and New Zealand were all factors that drew its attention. The spectacular economic successes of the Northwest Pacific and parts of Southeast Asia attracted world attention to the region; concepts of the 'Pacific Rim' and the 'Pacific Community' encompassed to some extent the whole Pacific region - even the remote, under-developed parts acquired a new significance. The strategic importance of the Pacific has been part of this awareness, especially the sea-lanes that offer a vital alternative route between the Pacific and Indian oceans (Harries 1989: 17).

Strategic importance is never derived solely from the characteristics of the region itself; it is contingent and situational in character, basically a situation created by the competing wills, intentions and capacities of the main players conferring or denying strategic importance (Harries 1989: 15). In this case, the entrance to the Pacific from the Indian Ocean, the straits that separate the islands of Indonesia, were of interest to world powers. Indonesia was ...'*endowed by chance with what is probably the most strategically authoritative geographic location on earth*' (Griswold in the official journal of the US Navy League 1973, quoted by Southwood and Flanagan 1983: 19). Presidents of the US have stressed the importance of Indonesia, both economically and politically, and especially in the context of persuading people to support the war in Vietnam: Eisenhower, in his 1953 US Governors' Conference speech, stated that:

> *we are voting for the cheapest way that we can prevent the occurrence of something that would be of a most terrible significance to the United States of America, our security, our power and ability to get certain things we need*

> *from the riches of the Indonesian territory and from Southeast Asia* (Southwood and Flanagan 1983: 19).

Again, the importance of Indonesia was stressed in Eisenhower's 'falling dominoes' speech of 1954, and Nixon asserted the necessity of bombing North Vietnam to secure the South-east Asian region, writing in 1967 that *'containing the region's richest hoard of natural resources, Indonesia constitutes the greatest prize in the South-East Asian area'* ('Asia After Vietnam' in *Foreign Affairs* cited by Southwood and Flanagan 1983: 17). The US has long involved itself in Indonesia's internal affairs, and the importance of Indonesia is stressed by Southwood and Flanagan in their analysis of *'America's dependence on and domination of Indonesia as the lynchpin of its anti-communist, capitalist endeavours in South-east Asia* (1983: 36). Clearly, the US was not interested in the struggles of the Fourth World West Papuan people against the Indonesian state and Australia followed the US in its foreign policy.

BRIEF HISTORY OF INDONESIAN TAKE-OVER OF WEST NEW GUINEA

Events in Indonesia in 1962, in which Suharto was promoted to Major-General and given command of the campaign to capture West New Guinea, culminated in its occupation and annexation, and the denial of the right of self-determination to its people. The acquiescence of the West assisted in these actions and continues to support the maintenance of the regime's repressive military rule of terror (Southwood and Flanagan 1983: 36). The decolonisation process in West New Guinea was a painful one, complicated by the intervention of World War 2 and the diverse nature of the territories of the Dutch East Indies. West New Guinea was the largest territory, part of the New Guinea land-mass, and at the Hague Round Table Conference in 1949 it was not included in the discussions leading to the Transfer of Sovereignty. West New Guinea was:

> *specifically excluded on the grounds that within a year of the date of the transfer of sovereignty ... the question of the political status of New Guinea be determined through negotiations between the Republic of the United States of Indonesia and the Kingdom of the Netherlands* (Hastings 1973: 199).

The proposed talks never took place and the bitterly contested struggle ended with the Netherlands' transfer of sovereignty in 1962 through the United Nations.

Precedent for Indonesia's claim was set by the territorial integrity norm (Young 1983: 200). The Indonesians refused to litigate before the World Court and claimed that:

> *the Republic was successor state to the entire Netherlands East Indies, so the province was theirs, insisting, in any case, that the issue was a political one, not legal* (Hastings 1973: 199).

The fact that both Dutch and Indonesian claims rested on sovereignty, and the Dutch had not transferred sovereignty in 1949, meant that the Dutch claim that West New Guineans should have the right of self-determination depended upon how the sovereignty issue was regarded. According to Hastings (1973: 199), one implication of the self-determination argument was inescapable; the rapid development of the coastal West New Guineans caused them to believe in that right and to organise politically around it. Dr. Subandrio, then Indonesia's Foreign Minister, was concerned at the growing political awareness of West Papuans. If they became politically articulate in the cause of their own independence in an anti-colonialist world, Indonesian claims based on legitimacy stood little chance of acceptance among the Afro-Asian states. With little on which to base the claim, Indonesia acted, and airforce and paratroop units were mobilised at East Indonesian airfields in December 1961; together with naval support they commenced the military invasion of West New Guinea.

Although it was understood by all sides that a full-scale war would have been won by the Dutch, the US Attorney-General Robert Kennedy on a visit to The Hague made it clear that his country would not support the Netherlands and refused permission for a Dutch aircraft carrier to travel to West New Guinea through the Panama Canal (Hastings 1973: 210). Australia echoed the US decision by refusing the vessel refuelling facilities, and the fracas ended with the Dutch and Indonesians sitting down under the Chairmanship of a United Nations Special Representative, Ellsworth Bunker. Sovereignty over West New Guinea was transferred from the Netherlands to an interim United Nations Administration which was to hand full administrative responsibility - not sovereignty - to Indonesia with the stipulation that the West Papuan people would exercise free choice over the future relationship with Indonesia in a formal act to occur before the end of 1969. This was the Act of Free Choice, a

farcical event that mocked its own name and demeaned the status of the United Nations.

During the annexation of West New Guinea by Indonesia, most attention had centred around the arguments of colonial territories and Indonesian nationalism, and counter-arguments involved the issues of West Papuan ethnicity. Vital issues were masked in nationalistic propaganda and sensational actions. Even as the Indonesian military and warships of the Royal Dutch navy had headed towards the West New Guinea coast, the prospect of war on the northern borders of Australia did not raise a frenzy of attention or alarm, although some expatriates and nationals in Australian Papua and New Guinea attempted to sound a warning of future problems. For some observers, the issues were bound up in the rhetoric and vigour of newly successful nationalism and decolonisation Indonesia had pushed to the limits; to the West Papuans, freedom from the ineffective Dutch colonial government. As noted by Budiardjo and Liong (1988):

> *Little has been written about Papuan resistance to the European colonisers. To ignore this is to fail to understand the roots of contemporary Papuan history.*

Like the Portuguese who recognised the possibility of power in Europe by gaining economic control of the straits of Malacca, the Dutch had also gained international power by their control of the riches of the Spice Islands, later to become the nation-state Indonesia. Exploitation of vast oil reserves followed the spice trade, and the knowledge of other mineral resources focussed international attention on the struggle by Indonesia to oust Dutch colonial rule. The United States was geared up to commence work on what is now known to be one of the largest mines in the world, the giant Freeport copper and gold mine on Ertsberg Mountain. A further exploration project nearby, now in its final stages, is on the same fault line as Freeport, and Ok Tedi and Porgera mines in Papua New Guinea.

Freeport, which is considered the 'jewel in the crown' of its American company Freeport McMoRan Inc., is the largest tax payer in Indonesia, after the oil producers,

and in 1967 became its first big foreign investor (Durie 1991: 21). The fate of the traditional landowners of Ertsberg is of no interest to members of international business consortiums or their shareholders. Hyndman (1988) has examined the impact of the Freeport mine on the Amungme, along with analyses of Ok Tedi and Bougainville, as examples of economic imperialism that have devastated the lives and livelihoods of indigenous peoples. Freeport is an important example of the economic rationale for United States interest in Irian Jaya; the historical reasons for securing the straits of Malacca, Sunda, Lombok and Ombai-Wetar (north of Timor) have culminated in the necessity of maintaining passage for US nuclear submarines (Southwood and Flanagan 1983: 20). Irian Jaya is the largest land mass in the archipelago and provides the government of Indonesia with minerals, vast tracts of forest and 'empty' land for transmigration sites. It was an asset worth fighting for, and one that Indonesia could rely on the US for assistance in securing. Many of the 'tribal' people who lived in these 'empty' lands are now refugees in camps over the border in Papua New Guinea.

Many of the West Papuan people, cut off from emerging Melanesian nationalism and oblivious to commerce and international trade in the world capitalist system, were unaware of the forces that were shaping their future when they fought so bitterly to repel the Dutch colonialists. The coastal people who had benefited from the last-minute Dutch thrust toward education and creating an administrative elite were included in the numbers who turned to the Indonesians for help in expelling the Dutch. Some West Papuan resistance fighters involved with the OPM told me that their fathers and uncles had fought willingly alongside Indonesians during the battles to overthrow the Dutch, never believing that their own claims to independence would ultimately be denied. The winds of change that were blowing over the Pacific and Southeast Asia were heralding the new era of self-determination and independence; when it came to Indonesia's turn the West Papuans could only watch others take what they had hoped to regain. The right of the Papuan people to determine their own future was never conceded by Indonesia and the Act of Free Choice, to be exercised six years after Indonesia gained control, did not contain guarantees that their right would be protected (Budiardjo and Liong 1988: 10).

The knowledge that the United States would support their claim, strengthened the nationalistic rhetoric of Sukarno at a time of economic chaos. Throughout the 1960s conditions in Irian Jaya, *Irian Barat*, as it was known at the time, deteriorated rapidly. The interim authority, the UNTEA was a makeshift and inefficient administration intent on effecting a handover as quickly as possible; the province became a casualty of the worst and most selfish excesses of the Soekarnoist regime (Hastings 1973: 213). The UNTEA negotiated a special credit agreement with Indonesia and the Netherlands enabling it to stockpile essential foodstuffs for the two months following its departure, however at the same time a counter movement of goods left - not only luxury items, but car tyres, medical instruments, soap, baby food, sugar and rice found their way back to Jakarta (van der Veur 1963: 333). A visiting UN team in 1967, after Sukarno's demise, discovered that every material asset left by the Dutch, from hundreds of ships, vehicles, school and office equipment to typewriter ribbons, had been shipped out or vandalised by the Indonesian military. According to the UN team *'the explanation was really quite simple: it was plunder'* (Dorney 1990: 268).

Following border incidents which increased during the 1960's, Verrier (1975:, 336) stated that:

> *Along with the troubles in PNG as a whole, the Australian Government played this down and, from 1967, to avoid embarrassing Indonesia, took a tougher line on border crossing even of the traditional kind which had been tolerated in the past.*

Verrier saw the dispute as the catalyst in the emergence of Papua New Guinea nationalism in the 1960's and May (1986: 87) also noted the reaction of expatriates whose concern influenced the response of the first wave of the educated elite in Papua New Guinea, quoting the president of the Highland Farmers' and Settler' Association, Ian Downs:

> *...it is not our intention to deliver the Highlands people so recently won to civilisation into the hands of the decadent, degenerate Indonesian bandits.*

Militarisation and transmigration policy in Irian Jaya over the next twenty years created the small body of refugees who fled events in their own country to take up residence in neighbouring Papua New Guinea. In 1984, following widespread

military action, land take-overs and increased involvement of the OPM, an influx of approximately 10,000 West Papuans crossed the border to seek refuge in Papua New Guinea. The deliberate cultivation of obscurity of events in West Papua could not be maintained under the weight of numbers of these so-called 'border crossers', although the government of Papua New Guinea attempted by passive means to ignore the situation of over 10,000 persons camped inside their border. Since the 1962 take-over of West New Guinea by Indonesia, Papua New Guinea had been thrust into the role of unwilling participant in an international problem, and was now the innocent recipient of the first refugees in the Melanesian Asian Pacific region.

The economic rape of the resources of Irian Jaya, including land appropriation and the Javanese transported to fill the 'empty' spaces, have resulted in the refugee problem. The resistance of the West Papuan people has manifested itself in the OPM, as its fighting arm, and a growing awareness that other nationalist movements throughout Melanesia continue to challenge oppression. The Indonesian take-over of the western half of the island of New Guinea is documented in some critical detail by Sharp (1977a), Osborne (1985a) and others noted in Chapter Two; the incorporation has been accepted as a foregone conclusion by foreign governments. Particular military incidents which led to a growing awareness of nationalism and people fleeing into Papua New Guinea include the following incidents. A few people had left West Papua before the Indonesian invasion, and this number increased from then until the 1969 Act of Free Choice; about 2000 people had entered Papua New Guinea and were living in refugee villages along the border. Another 1700 crossed during the three months voting period of the Act, although Australian *kiaps* (District administration officers) discouraged the new arrivals to the point of chasing them back over the border. Many West Papuans were killed by Indonesian troops.

At this early time Indonesian troops first crossed into Papua New Guinea; incidents included them firing on the District Administrator and two officials at Watung, and a few days later firing at the inmates of a refugee camp twelve miles inside Papua New Guinea. A fortnight later an Australian patrol six miles inside Papua New Guinea was attacked and four men killed. Australia did not confront

Indonesia about these attacks, although 50 police and troops were sent to the border and after this time, as Osborne noted (1985a: 158) a blind eye would be turned to all but the most provocative of Indonesian incursions. Some of the people now arriving had walked for weeks from as far as the central highlands, all told desperate stories of violence and were afraid to return. At this time refugees were moved away from the border to distant Manus Island - separating the refugees was an attempt to remove the possibility of organised nationalist movements; removing the victims was the official response to the Indonesian Army's attacks on the refugees in their make-shift camps.

The Arfak rebellion which started in July 1965 went on for two years with heavy loss of life, reportedly 3500 Arfaks died (Osborne 1985a: 36). This was the birthplace of the OPM, and the Arfak resistance inspired West Papuans in other regions to lend their support to it. At the height of the fighting the Indonesian government announced the start of the transmigration program which targeted the areas of most resistance: Manokwari, Fak Fak, Nabire, Jayapura, and Merauke in the south-east. Merauke was the focus of anti-Indonesian revolt in 1968, and has remained a trouble-spot from which large numbers of refugees have fled. Transmigration sites have proliferated (Figs.5 and 6). In the central Baliem Valley the Dani rebelled against enforced 'Indonesianisation' which ridiculed their culture; Wamena was the first area where villagers were relocated in to 'planned', concentrated housing where soldiers enforced alien life-styles.

The Me people of the Paniai Lakes (formerly called Kapauku by Pospisil 1963) also rebelled against the Indonesians in 1969 as well as in 1977-78; in 1969 the resulting warfare, with paratroopers dropped in and machine-gun strafing from US supplied B26 bombers, resulted in 14,000 Papuans abandoning their houses and land and fleeing into the mountains to hide. This is described in detail in Osborne's book *Indonesia's Secret War* (1985a) and highlander refugees now resettled at the East Awin camp recounted their experiences to me in 1989. It was to the Me people that the Indonesian military gave the diseased pigs that started the deadly cysticercosis epidemic (Tumada and Margono 1973, Hyndman 1987), a 'peace-offering' that brought more suffering.

At the time of the 1969 elections, the so-called Act of Free Choice, no-one from Papua New Guinea or anyone with a foreign passport was allowed to travel within West New Guinea or inside Papua New Guinea anywhere near the border. Photographs taken secretly by a foreign national living in Irian Jaya at the time of the elections show heavily armed Indonesian soldiers guarding voting centres, although only selected representatives from each district were permitted by the Indonesian government to vote. The second major uprising in the Paniai Lakes area occurred in 1977. Tugawoi village near Enarotali was photographed in April, 1977 (at the time of Indonesian general elections) by a visitor; this village was later razed to the ground and again photographs exist to show what had occurred. The bombing, including the use of napalm on villagers near Wamena in July 1977 was witnessed by several Royal Australian Airforce Officers. Exact diary entries of Indonesian army actions over a period of a month were taken. The RAAF were taking part in the mapping operation that was part of Australia's military aid to Indonesia and although they were warned by the Indonesians not to take photographs, they watched the Indonesian war planes refuel and rearm and head off northwest along the valley, dumping napalm on the villages (Osborne 1985a: 68).

The Indonesian government's actions show that it was worried about the disruptive power of the OPM despite statements to the contrary. Although they did not succeed in destroying Arfak resistance, 6000 crack troops had been sent to Manokwari in 1968, and the murder of civilians, particularly unarmed women and children, in many areas and over many years, demonstrate an understanding that resistance is a movement of the people, not confined to OPM armed fighting units. In the hunt for OPM members, whole villages had been destroyed as in this type of warfare (as in Vietnam) it is impossible to separate the active fighters from the rest of the population.

In 1972 closer Australian co-operation had been sought to jointly patrol the border. Officially the Australian government exercised caution, considering the rebel soldiers to be of nuisance value only, but Papua New Guinea's new leaders considered that the OPM had the capacity to cause problems between Papua New Guinea and

Indonesia. From 1973 until 1975, the year of Papua New Guinea's Independence, Papua New Guinea Foreign Affairs Minister, Albert Maori Kiki, had meetings with the OPM leaders but could not convince them to give up their struggle. Although he attempted to advise the Indonesians, through Australia, that they should be encouraged to treat the OPM activities as low-level dissidence not constituting a military threat, over the next four years Indonesia mounted large scale operations against OPM suspects. The result was that thousands of West Papuans fled across the border; the Papua New Guinea government had at this time changed its policy to publicly support Indonesia in all regards except actual border patrols. Most news of the troubles in Irian Jaya during these years came first hand from people who were involved, especially pilots who had to fly refugees back. An Indonesian (Javanese) informant told me he saw several refugees who were forcibly returned, taken from the plane by soldiers and shot behind a shed before the plane had cleared the runway for take-off. The refugees, all men, were not met by any officials other than members of the Indonesian army.

Towards the end of 1975 there were student demonstrations outside the Indonesian Embassy in Port Moresby after Indonesia invaded East Timor, and Melsol, a Melanesian solidarity group was formed to give support to West Papuans. By 1991, Melsol had become involved in violent political protests, according to King (1991: 69); most student protests in Papua New Guinea have disrupted the University of Papua New Guinea, which was shut down in second semester 1991 (Tiffany 1992: 15) but have had little effect on government policy. In 1977 Somare, the then Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, undertook a state visit to Indonesia. It was as if this action publicly set a seal of approval on Indonesia's actions; military action against the OPM was stepped up, including the raids on the Baliem Valley villages and at Enarotali, and refugees again crossed into Papua New Guinea as they had done during the Act of Free Choice. Whole villages, some numbering more than 200 people and including people from the distant central highlands, turned up claiming they were afraid to go home, and according to Osborne (1985a: 160) as if to confirm this, Indonesian soldiers again entered Papua New Guinea, this time shooting dead a West Sepik villager. Despite this, Papua New Guinea returned the refugees over the border. Many of the

refugees who were not shot by the Indonesian military escaped and lived in hiding in the bush.

Indonesia exerts an external control over Papua New Guinea's dealings with other nations in the region. According to McMichael (1987, 2),*' Indonesia's view of its own historical primacy in the region served to legitimise the Republic's leading role in the formation of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1967 and continues to justify its primus inter pares role in that organisation.'* In February 1984 Prime Minister Somare stated that he had again indicated to the Indonesian government a desire to join ASEAN, however the tensions generated by the events on the border precluded any such decision (Hewison *et al* 1985: 171). According to McMichael (1987, 21), *'sensitivities over border security problems, Indonesian development policies in Irian Jaya and the fate of thousands of border crossers from Irian Jaya who have crossed into Papua New Guinea since 1984 will remain sticking points between the two countries. Indonesia has tacitly resisted pressure by the Wingti government to accord Papua New Guinea membership of ASEAN, in part it seems, on the grounds that Papua New Guinea would have little to offer ASEAN in terms of economic, strategic or cultural benefits'* (McMichael 1987, 21). Although analysis of the purported economic benefits of membership of ASEAN show that alliance would not necessarily provide either material gains or a solution for Papua New Guinea's border problem, and could damage Papua New Guinea's status as a leader in the South Pacific, pursuit of membership remains a government priority. In the late 1980s Papua New Guinea gained accession to ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Co-operation, the first non-member country to be permitted to do so. Then Papua New Guinea Foreign Secretary Bill Dihm, stated that:

> *This gives us a stronger framework for doing business with ASEAN countries. But I don't see Papua New Guinea as a 'bridge nation' between Asia and the South Pacific. People walk over bridges* (Hewison *et al* 1985: 174).

CHAPTER FIVE

BORDER DEVELOPMENT

The boundary between Indonesia and Papua New Guinea is, as previously suggested, notoriously hard to find on the ground. It is therefore, not surprising that it should sometimes be crossed through carelessness or by mistake (Wolfers 1988: 35)

The Papua New Guinea/Irian Jaya situation has been discussed most frequently in terms of the 'border problem', and it is the border between the two countries on which most of the problems have focussed (Herlihy 1986; May 1986; Osborne 1985a; Verrier 1986; Wolfers 1988). The provinces which flank the border in Papua New Guinea are the Sandaun (West Sepik) and the Western Province. The situation in Sandaun has received attention, both because of early involvement with refugees, proximity to Jayapura, the capital of Irian Jaya, and the interest of the Catholic Bishop of Vanimo, John Etheridge. John Etheridge who returned to Australia due to ill health in 1989, gave great physical and moral support to the refugees when the Papua New Guinea government was reluctant to become involved.

The Western Province is of particular interest due to the relocation of the border refugee camps to an isolated forest location at East Awin, about 40 kms east of the border. The Catholic mission, under the leadership of Bishop Gerard Deschamps, has likewise been a major source of practical and moral support to the refugees. With the assistance of other church groups, these missions continue to aid refugees. As will be shown in later chapters dealing with the camps, the isolation of the new camp in the Western Province will mean continuing difficulties for refugees residing there.

The history of economic development in relation to the Awin, particularly free resettlement on the Upper Fly River, and problems with the physical and political situation, has been discussed by Jackson (1979, 3-14), and in relation to the Ok Tedi mining venture by Jackson (1982), and Hyndman (1988, 1991a). Verrier (1986: 32-48) has examined the neglect of the western boundary and the growth of awareness since 1949 when concern about the status of West New Guinea and the border arose: interest in border development grew as a result of the settlement of the dispute in Indonesia's favour. Herlihy (1986: 175-199) has analysed the current concern for development in the border zone and questioned the viability and validity of such initiatives against the historical facts.

Herlihy (1986: 175) defines the term 'border zone' as the 32 km quarantine strip which parallels the border line across PNG. From the southern coast, the strip contains varied terrain; the swamps of the Western Province, inundated for much of the year, the barrier of the central cordillera, the vast grasslands of the West Sepik River, the Bewani and border ranges, swamps of the Neumeyer Plain and over the Oenake Mountains, the coastal lowlands of Sandaun Province near Vanimo.

Hyndman (1988, 1991b) has demonstrated the artificiality of the political border in relation to territories of Melanesian people (Map 2). Population figures for these border areas are 700 Wopkaimin Mountain Ok, 3,000 Ningerum and 2,200 Yonggom Lowland Ok peoples, 6,000 Aikyom Awin-Pa peoples, and of the Middle Fly Marind speaking peoples, 2,000 Boazi and 1,500 Zimakani. Altogether there are over 40,000 indigenous peoples including over 23,000 Kiwai Trans Fly peoples (Hyndman 1991b: 358); from this southern region the Ningerum and Yonggom, and some Marind speakers, whose territories spread each side of the border, make up the greatest numbers of refugees in the camps.

Population density in the Sandaun and Western Provinces is low, and due to the uneven distribution and dispersed settlement patterns development costs are high, five to fifteen times higher than in densely populated areas (Herlihy 1986: 177). Border communities were isolated, from each other and from the outside world, and communication and trade involved east-west rather than north-south links. Over much of the area, people were hunter-gatherer-horticulturalists and communities were less cohesive, often acting in independent ways compared with the communally oriented intensive agriculturalists of the central highlands. This attitude also disadvantaged them when it came to participating in cash cropping ventures such as the rubber schemes in the Kiunga area.

Generally, for physical and political reasons, the people of the border regions have been neglected. The fact that the 32 km strip was a buffer zone for quarantine purposes caused government initiated constraint on economic development (Herlihy 1986: 186) and in effect, has protected development elsewhere at the expense of Western Province villagers. Herlihy sees this restriction on the income-earning opportunities to border villagers, available to other Papua New Guineans, as a benefit that accrues mainly to the diplomatic levels of Indonesian, Papua New Guinea and

Australian governments, and provides Papua New Guinea government officials with an excuse to neglect border development and to avoid the expense of regular field patrols and active quarantine supervision. There is no equivalent arrangement on the Indonesian side of the border, enabling Indonesia to evade responsibility for containment of its communicable diseases and pests (Herlihy 1986: 186). More importantly, Indonesia does not recognise the need or possibility of protecting Irian Jaya, previously protected by the sea barrier, from most of the diseases endemic west of the Wallace Line (Carr 1972: 153). Diseases introduced on to the New Guinea mainland since the Indonesian take-over have no physical barrier to prevent their spread into Papua New Guinea.

Deer, originally introduced by the Dutch, range freely over the border; these animals, which carry screw-worm fly infestations and are regarded as a danger to other herds, were consigned to protected status by Indonesian authorities; large illustrated bill-boards at airports in Irian Jaya warned against trapping or killing a random assortment of native and introduced animals without regard to their value, rarity, pest-status or traditional usage (D. Sands pers.comm.). However, migrants from Java now hunt deer commercially (Aditjondro 1986: 167), possibly for the valuable 'velvet' believed by many Asians to be an aphrodisiac, as well as meat. Wounded animals, or those stripped of their antlers, are a prime fly-strike target and a pool for breeding infestations. Cattle projects in Papua New Guinea are small-scale, and fly strike can be monitored by owners. On the large pastoral leases of Northern Australia this pest could wipe out the cattle industry, and for this reason liaison between Australia and Indonesia also protects Papua New Guinea. The Australian/Indonesian agricultural facility at Bogor in Java enables control of some animal diseases but interaction with officials on the Irian Jaya side of the border has always been difficult. Many other diseases present in Indonesia are not closely monitored (Anon: CSIRO 1979).

Regular patrols along the border surveying villages for signs of the now manageable avian Newcastle Disease, which is spread by the native bird population and can decimate poultry, were joined by health workers interested in human disease. Medical workers attached themselves to these patrols to gain access to villages and refugee camps to check the progress of human diseases, including malaria, TB and the fatal disease human cysticercosis (Barnish 1984 and 1985) and other chronic parasitic

infestations. Human cysticercosis was brought in to the Paniai Lakes area of West Irian by Indonesians in 1971 in a single importation of one batch of infected pigs (Gunawan *et al* 1976, Gajdusek 1978, Desowitz 1981). The entry of this fatal disease was seen as the greatest parasitic threat to Papua New Guinea (Ashford *et al* 1981).

It is well-documented that the pig tape-worm *Taenia solium* and the attendant human cysticercosis disease had never been found anywhere on the New Guinea mainland (Gajdusek 1978: 335). Two surveys were undertaken by Dutch medical teams in West New Guinea in 1957 and 1959, one specifically investigating the intestinal parasites of people of the Paniai district. In Papua New Guinea extensive searches had confirmed the absence of taeniasis (Bearup and Lawrence 1950; Ashford *et al* 1981). For a complete history of the entry of cysticercosis on to the New Guinea mainland see Desowitz 1981 and Hyndman 1987.

According to Herlihy (1986: 187) maintenance of the quarantine strip has provided the government with an excuse for neglect of border development: programs and liaison with agriculture officers were not necessary as cash crops and livestock projects were not present. The under-developed and under-resourced state of the border region made it possible for the large numbers of refugees to move into Papua New Guinea and join villages or make new village camps.

The Dutch and Australian governments had initiated moves to establish uniform quarantine regulations during the 1950s, but these were abandoned by the Indonesians after the takeover (Hasluck 1976: 360) in Herlihy (1986: 187). Australian reaction was to tighten controls on development within the border zone, at a time when all over the then territory of New Guinea, villagers were embarking on cash cropping ventures. Interest was shown in cattle and poultry projects, and rice, coffee and cocoa were planted. Most of these attempts to join the development era were unsuccessful; cattle were expensive and could not be purchased without extension assistance and development bank loans and were discouraged by the Department of Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries (DASF, later Department of Primary Industries and currently DAL, Department of Agriculture and Livestock), although screw-worm fly was already established in the whole region. Coffee growing was discouraged because of the threat of foreign pathogens spreading to the coffee industry in the highlands.

Herlihy is critical of the policy of the DASF at the time, describing the department as one of the most powerful political forces in the area, singularly ill-attuned to the political ramifications of border management and due to confusion in its ranks, responsible for a series of conflicting directives about what could and could not be grown or kept within the border zone (1986: 187). Despite confusion arising from policy conflicts at senior levels and the ensuing uncertainty among field workers, many of the fears arising from the takeover and the consequent breakdown of restrictions were to prove correct, and the department, often unaware of changes taking place west of the border, acted accordingly.

The futility of the ban on coffee and cattle projects, which could be monitored, was realised by the 1970s. The crossing of the border by people, dogs, pigs and deer could not be prevented or checked and government officials and West Sepik politicians moved that the policy restricting agricultural development be relaxed (Herlihy 1986: 188). DASF refused, citing international precedent, and claimed that ideally the buffer zone should be widened.

In 1979 the Papua New Guinea-Indonesia border agreement was renegotiated. Although it seems obvious that there were advantages to the three countries - Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Australia - working together on quarantine matters, such co-operation did not follow. Officially, good relations between Papua New Guinea and Indonesia were publicised but conditions for border zone villagers did not improve; according to Herlihy (1986: 189) there were signs that the problems in maintaining the quarantine strip would intensify; the enormous scope of the Indonesian transmigration program, the trans Irian Jaya highway pushing through the forest close to the border, and the huge projects at Ok Tedi and Vanimo all contained potential quarantine problems.

The highway strayed over the border into Papua New Guinea three times during its construction, and as Dorney (1990: 269) states:

> *This road was no bush track. From the air it was a thick red scar through the green savanna landscape. The road corridor was about fifty metres wide and the forty units of heavy equipment engaged in the project were pushing the road north very fast.*

Close by, three million hectares of land were to be divided up into settlement blocks that would support a proposed transmigration population of four million. The then premier of Morobe Province, Utula Samana, visited Irian Jaya in 1983 and voiced his fears regarding the border area:

> *Now one could easily say that perhaps that is to minimise the problem of border crossing by sealing the border line with populations that are more ethnically related to a Java-orientated government. A buffer zone for the interests of the stability of the Indonesian State. That raises a lot of implications for future problems purely from the PNG perspective'* (quoted by Dorney 1990: 270).

Mining projects have had a turbulent history on the island of New Guinea and remain a contentious issue, promising wealth for governments, and problems for indigenous people and their environment. The Bougainville secessionist movement and the war which flared up in 1988 demonstrate that mining can also cause great problems for governments.

Mining as development?

The potential of resource wealth in Papua New Guinea is vast; Bougainville has contributed 40 percent of total export earnings, 17 percent of the national budget per annum. The mine closure in 1989 slowed down the economy, both government infrastructure and private business suffered. Bougainville Copper Limited (BCL) was aware of the possibility of future difficulties when the venture commenced (Espie 1972: 340); the political moves toward secession begun in 1962 (outlined in Chapter Two) were acknowledged as difficulties in land acquisition, resettlement and ethnic clashes.

Porgera in Enga Province has an estimated $4.6 billions worth of gold expected to provide about $600 million royalties and corporate taxes to the government; development costs are $1 billion. Misima Island gold mine is expected to average 200,000 ounces a year for ten years, and the new mine at Lihir in New Ireland is larger than Porgera with an estimated 500 tonnes of gold. The Ok Tedi mine in the Western Province produces about the same amount of copper and gold as Bougainville, contributing some 30 percent of foreign exchange earnings (Game 1989: 9). The wealth of the deposits should herald an era of vast government financial

resources but it has been demonstrated that the impact on local societies is disturbing (see Connell and Howitt 1991, Connell 1991, Hyndman 1991a). On a wider scale, how the government utilises the money is important: Jackson (1982: 185) sees as an absolute minimum that the benefits from mining projects should lead to a situation whereby both the per capita income of the local people and the levels of government services available to them should at least be equal to the relevant national average level, although there is a counter ideology - that excessive levels of development in mining areas should be restricted. The fundamental problem, according to Jackson (1982: 183) remains the manner in which government spends its revenues. To date, this has been in consumption rather than on investment and the logic of mining as a way to reduce the government's dependence upon Australian aid is questionable strategy.

In 1990 the level of Australian untied aid was $375 million per annum and Bougainville had been in production for over 20 years with little obvious benefits accruing to the general populace. Justice Bernard Narokobi, leader of the Melanesian Alliance, has called for Australian aid to be redirected to economic reconstruction instead of current expenditure (Game 1989: 9) and *Post-Courier* newspaper editor Luke Sela has argued in many editorials that the Australian money should be tied to specific projects to avoid waste. Sela has referred to the breakdown of institutions - hospitals, government offices, defence force establishments (for which Australia provides a special aid package - $50 million per year currently), all left in good condition by the Australian Administration at Independence, now completely run-down (Game 1989: 9).

The expenses involved in running Papua New Guinea's large public service, a legacy of the former administration, and the crippling costs of over-government, are often criticised, yet not easily dismantled. Former Prime Minister Rabbie Namaliu has said that although Papua New Guinea has a thriving democracy *'one of our problems is that we have taken democracy to the extreme'* (Game 1989: 9). On precedent, it seems unlikely that the wealth flowing through the coffers of government in the next decade, will filter through to the ordinary people. The poverty of the government was stressed by Foreign Minister Somare in early 1991; commenting on the collapse of law and order in Papua New Guinea, he suggested that in future, the mining sector should

pay for the extra policing to protect their goods targeted by criminals (*ABC Radio News* 7 March 1991).

Mining companies have been protected by insurance cover in the past but following the Bougainville closure will have to fight harder to convince insurance companies to take on the risk. The BHP managed Ok Tedi mine was compensated with an undisclosed sum for the collapsed tailings dam (MacDonald 1991: 24).

The insurance case involving the Bougainville closure was one of Australia's biggest legal battles, involving claims for an estimated $500 million compensation. Accurately defining the cause of the closure was paramount; insurers are not liable if the closure was caused by or resulted from *'insurrection, rebellion, revolution, civil war or usurped power on Bougainville Island'* and in its claims CRA Bougainville has not given a specific name to the troubles. The Papua New Guinea government as a part-owner of the mine did not want to jeopardise a favourable settlement by giving evidence that a civil war had occurred. Legal observers cited cases arising from the 1916 Irish rebellion as possible precedents (MacDonald 1991: 24), however if CRA Bougainville is successful in its claims, insurance companies will be even more cautious about mining ventures in Papua New Guinea in the future.

Development for the Western Province?

Ok Tedi was described by Jackson (1982: 3), as

> *one of the largest and most complicated mining projects undertaken in the South-west Pacific; a project which is to form a cornerstone of the Papua New Guinea economy; a project in which some of the world's most sophisticated technology is to be used; a project which will cost one billion American dollars to develop and which will produce over ten billion dollars worth of gold and copper; a project which will generate four billion dollars in revenue for the Papua New Guinea government, that is, equivalent to five years, total revenue at present from all sources; a project that required 60 kilometres of cores to be drilled in its proving; one which will require three million man-days of labour to construct. All this is to take place in an area which was not even contacted by the outside world 17 years ago; in an area which has witnessed virtually no development to date; in an area which receives over 10,000 millimetres of rain a year, which is almost entirely without any road, which is 850 kilometres flying distance from the national capital yet only 18 kilometres from an international border, and which is marked by some of the most rugged mountain country in the world.*

The potential ore load at Ok Tedi was discovered in 1968, and the story since then, of geological surveys and government and company negotiations, has been a protracted and difficult one.

Hyndman (*Ok Tedi Environmental Study 1982; Ulijaszek, Hyndman, and Lourie 1987; Hyndman 1988, 1991a, 1991b)* has examined the progress of the Ok Tedi mine and its effects on the ecology and the people of the area. A series of disasters began in 1984 with the one kilometre-long landslide which destroyed any prospect of a tailings dam; in June a barge overturned in the Fly River estuary spilling 2700 sixty litre drums of cyanide, and a by-pass valve at the mine left open expelled 1000 cubic metres of concentrated cyanide waste into the Ok Tedi (Hyndman 1988: 290).

Despite Somare's warning that the mine would be closed down unless production continued along the lines specified in the 1980 contract, the project continued without a permanent tailings dam, a hydro scheme or an ocean port, continuing to release large quantities of sediment, tailings and chemical wastes exceeding safety limits recommended by the 1982 Ok Tedi Environmental Study (Hyndman 1988: 290). As the Ok Tedi project was exempted from the Environmental Protection Act of 1978 because of the 1982 Ok Tedi environmental study, proceeding with mining under such ecologically dangerous conditions made a 'complete mockery of the 1982 OTES' (Hyndman 1988: 290).

Despite the numbers of Papua New Guineans working for Ok Tedi, after the initial construction phase when fifty per cent of the local Wopkaimin landowners were employed, most were replaced by foreigners and other national workers. In 1981 the Wopkaimin protested, by means of a strike, both against the loss of semi-skilled jobs, and because of the Tabubil town-plan which forced local land-owners off their land. The mine was shut down by OTML and an emergency airlift provided for all white women and children (Hyndman 1988: 291). By 1985 the roadside villages near the sago groves at Woktemwanim and Finalbin were large squatter settlements, suffering the effects of community dislocation and disruption. Mine workers rioted again in 1988, burning down the Country Club, which was empty at the time. It was claimed that Namaliu moved to shut the international airport at Daru to prevent an exodus, but employees left before this could be implemented.

The slum type squatter villages along the road are badly congested by traditional Wopkaimin standards and beer drinking, black-marketing of beer, adultery and fighting has seen a breakdown of social organisation, threatening family life (Hyndman 1991b: 291). The protests in 1981 and 1988 demonstrate that the local land owners are not passive recipients of social change, and Hyndman (1988, 1991b) contends that the religious revival movement embraced by the northern Mountain Ok peoples was the first evidence of a regional social protest movement which allowed them to regain some control of their own life.

The emergence of the giant Ok Tedi mine has been the greatest purveyor of social change and the largest development ever seen in the previously neglected Western Province. The map (Map. 1) illustrates the proximity of Ok Tedi to the international border; disruption by local land owners, refugees or OPM forces remains a possibility and has been threatened by local leaders (Osborne 1985a: 122), Indonesia attempted to intervene in the Bougainville dispute, demanding Australian military assistance (*Post Courier* 27 July 1990) although it is the province furthest from the border. Mining is in Papua New Guinea to stay, and according to Jackson (1982: 186):

> *the main lesson to be learned from Ok Tedi must be for the government to try - and it is a difficult task - to integrate mining more into the local, regional and national economy; to stop regarding it as a false sort of development and to use it positively both as a rich source of revenue and as the best available means of improving life in remote areas.*

While these ideas are now considered by governments and mining companies alike to be necessary in initiating projects, the problems of land ownership, and perceptions and expectations held by mining companies, governments and land owners, continue to make mining in Papua New Guinea a difficult and dangerous operation. Mining in Irian Jaya, serving the interests of multinational consortiums, international investors and monetary interests of the Indonesian government, continues regardless of the wishes, involvement or well-being of the dispossessed land-owners. As the war of secession in Bougainville has demonstrated, the effect of large-scale mining can be the cause of disruption and discontent, and the catalyst for Melanesian nationalist movements.

With the exception of Ok Tedi, the border region remains a back-water for development, a sparsely populated region where the indigenous people move with the seasons and refugees camped on the border and at East Awin can move about if they wish. On the other side of the border, transmigration sites continued to proliferate in the southern regions *'to promote stability on the border'* (Wanandi 1988: 93) and *'for national resilience'* (Transmigration Minister Zain quoted by Tasker *Far Eastern Economic Review* 9 March 1979). Indonesian battalions have continued their border postings and the ABRI military settlement scheme has packed border sites with military personal ... *'preserving ABRI's motivation as fighters and on national development'* (Murdani quoted in *Indonesia Reports* 14 March 1985). During the late 1970s, Indonesian soldiers moved freely inside Papua New Guinea, viewed by local residents and visitors around the Bensbach area, shooting deer and leaving camp sites littered with Indonesian army ration containers and cigarette packets. My photographs from this period include one of an army helicopter, on the ground, in grassed swamp country in a remote area. Since then, numerous incidents of aggressive military action against Papua New Guineans or persons suspected to be West Papuans in Papua New Guinea have been reported.

Some of the most violent transgressions, killings and village burnings, have been followed-up through diplomatic channels (Papua New Guinea acting Foreign Minister Giheno quoted in *Post Courier* 29 June 1990; *Post Courier* 27 June 1990, 26 July 1990, 16 August 1990; Murphy et al 1990; *Papua New Guinea Times* 23 August 1990; *Tapol* no 101, 1990; *The Age* 14 August 1990). During this period the Indonesian military confirmed some of the incidents that occurred inside Papua New Guinea (*Antara* 14 August 1990) but continued to blame Papua New Guinea for border problems. May (1987: 45) stated:

> *Border crossing has been essentially one way, border violations have been entirely at Papua New Guinea's expense, Papua New Guinea does not have a domestic insurgency overflowing its border, it has been Papua New Guinea rather than Indonesia that has had to seek explanations for external disturbances, and responsibility for the frequent ineffectiveness of liason machinery has been largely on the Indonesian side.*

Diplomatic sources usually deny or plead ignorance of events if questioned but continue their quest for legal rights of 'hot pursuit' inside Papua New Guinea. While the earlier border violations alleged by the Papua New Guinea government during 1983-84 were seen as *'minor'* (Wanandi 1988: 85) or *'comparatively minor'* (Wolfers

1988: 35), they have continued for nearly three decades. The movement of refugees in to Papua New Guinea, the OPM fighting forces and the refugees who remain in the border area, and the transgressions of the Indonesian military continue to make the border the most contentious issue between Indonesia and Papua New Guinea.

CHAPTER SIX

TRANSMIGRATION

> *Transmigration is the greatest single threat to the futures of the indigenous peoples of Indonesia.*
>
> Julian Burger, *Report From The Frontier* (1987: 142).

The refugee problem in Papua New Guinea has often been considered in terms of the difficulty in resolving the political status, residential status and prospects of refugees (May 1986: 85-159, Budiardjo and Liong: 93-112, Smith and Hewison 1986: 200-217, Oaisa 1988: 103-110). In this chapter the Indonesian government's policy of transmigration is presented as an important factor that has removed West Papuan people from their land and forced them to become landless vagrants around the towns, to join the resistance against the Indonesian military or flee their country. According to Bodley, *'major campaigns and wars of extermination waged against tribal peoples have usually been for the purpose of removing the population so that their territory could be utilised by outsiders to benefit the national economy'* (1982: 46). Invasion by mining and forestry logging companies, backed by a strong military presence, has also forced indigenous people off their land (Colchester 1986a, 1986b, 1986c; Hyndman 1988, 1991a). Clear-felling has been the usual method of preparing land for transmigration sites (Aditjondro 1989, 165; Otten 1986: 88), leaving the land seasonally inundated, eroded and useless.

Brief history of transmigration

> *The idea of trying to alleviate population pressure and poverty in Java by organizing and encouraging the movement of people from Java to the outer islands is almost a hundred years old* (Arndt 1986: 161)

Transmigration, the movement of poor and landless peasants from overcrowded Java to the less populated islands, has long been Indonesian government policy (Arndt 1986: 161); it was started by the Dutch in Indonesia in the early years of the 20th century, and its aim was, and remains, the movement of large numbers of people from heavily populated areas to the more sparsely populated regions in the 'outer islands'. Arndt (1986: 163) notes that *'transmigrants (and spontaneous migrants) have come from Bali, and recently also from Lombok, as well as Java. Unless specifically indicated, 'Java' as the source of migrants in this chapter includes the latter two small islands.'*

About 200,000 government-sponsored migrants were settled by 1940, including a large flow of spontaneous migration of labour to the Sumatran plantations. This 'colonisation' came to an end with the Japanese occupation in 1942 (Arndt 1986: 161). Following Indonesian independence, transmigration was revived, although numbers dwindled during the 'chaotic' years of the mid-1960s (Arndt 1986: 161). Transmigration was again revived after the 1965-66 change of regime, although it was *'recognized that transmigration could not solve, or even substantially alleviate the problem of 'population imbalance' between Java and the other islands, or even the problem of population pressure on Java'* (Arndt 1986: 162).

The First Five Year Plan (Repelita 1, 1969/70-7.3/4) was funded by the OPEC oil price increases of the 1970s; the older settlement areas in southern Sumatra were overcrowded *'and increasingly resembled some of the worst areas of Java itself'* (Arndt 1986: 163), both the scale of the transmigration and its regional development objectives became more ambitious. The land settlements were expected to develop into growth centres by *'attracting spontaneous migrants from Java'* (Arndt 1986: 163). Spontaneous migrants have added to the numbers of settlers in outer island locations, including Irian Jaya, bringing with them social and environmental problems (Aditjondro 1986: 168). The second Five Year Plan (Repelita 11, 1974/75-78/79) was more ambitious, and the third plan (Repelita 111, 1979/80-83/84) had a target of over 2 million persons over the plan period - the second oil price increase appeared to make this financially feasible.

Repelita 1V (1984/85-88/89) aimed to settle 1,000,000 over the five year period, and a substantial proportion of these were to be settled in Irian Jaya (Arndt 1986: 172). The ending of the oil boom saw a reduction in the target to about 800,000 families including 300,000 spontaneous migrants - the target for officially sponsored transmigrants would be about 500,000 families or 2.0-2.5 million persons (Arndt 1986, 172). According to Arndt, it was recognised in Jakarta that transmigration of one million or more Javanese would *'swamp the local Irianese population, was bound to invite political trouble within Irian Jaya and in consequence also with Papua New Guinea and conceivably Australia'* (Arndt 1986: 172). Huge sums were promised to integrate the people and promote economic development *'But this may exacerbate rather than alleviate the problem'* (Arndt 1986: 173).

Arndt (1986: 164) sees the transmigration program as beneficial, despite the above statement - the removal of 200-300,000 people a year *'must have done something to relieve population pressure'*, and further states that *'nor is there much doubt that the welfare of the great majority of the transmigrant families has been improved'* and that *'certainly, very few transmigrants, on the publicly available evidence, have returned to their home villages in Java.'* Very few transmigrants have returned to their home villages, but there is evidence that very many would do so if they had the funds (see for instance Otten 1986: 113).

By 1985, the transmigration program had been financed by the World Bank to a total of more than half a billion dollars, with several smaller donors including West Germany and the Netherlands, although the Netherlands has denied involvement (Colchester 1986: 67). Following critical world attention the Indonesian government stressed the humanitarian aspect of transmigration; cuts in the program due to changing economic conditions were mainly due to the fall in oil prices (Colchester 1987: 36). Indonesia's aims were to move over 65 million people in 20 years; a former Minister of Transmigration, Martono admitted this figure in 1986, claiming that it was hoped to move more if possible, in the largest movement of people known in history. Subroto, Minister for Transmigration in 1975, stated that 40 million hectares of land outside Java was available for transmigration; on the basis of 2 hectares per family this would supply 20 million families, however there has been little recognition by Indonesian policy makers of the real possibility of serious land shortages in the outer islands (Jones 1979: 218-221), a similar lack of understanding has been demonstrated by many outside supporters of transmigration.

In Irian Jaya, the plan was for several million people to be moved from Java and Bali (Donner 1987). In fact the program has proved an expensive and embarrassing failure for the Indonesian government and in 1987 the target number was cut from 100,000 to 1000 families. Despite this, the movement of people to Irian Jaya has had an enormous impact on the land and the indigenous people; at the time of take-over there were approximately 700,000 West Papuans, the immigrant Javanese population is reported by now to have overtaken the Melanesian population. The population of Irian Jaya was 1.2 million in 1980 (Donner 1987) and estimated to be about the same 5 years later (Colchester 1986: 102). In 1988 there were supposed to be 140,000 officially sponsored

Indonesians in Irian Jaya (TAPOL Bulletin no.86, April 1988); these figures demonstrate the large numbers of spontaneous migrants now in Irian Jaya.

Arndt wrote that it was *'most surprising'* that it had been increasing difficult to find suitable land for transmigrant settlements on the outer islands. It has been known for many years that soils in New Guinea were not comparable with the volcanic soils of Java: Petocz's specific work on Irian Jaya, first published in 1984, supplied this information in great detail (Petocz 1984 and 1988); rainforest does not cover rich or sustaining soils. As Petocz stated (1988: 87), *'while Irian Jaya is indeed the largest province in the country, a great proportion of the landmass is not suitable for human habitation'*. Petocz commenced work in Irian Jaya in 1980, and in 1988 stated that:

> *Without being judgmental, the writer offers the suggestion that during this reprieve, when the program in the province has been so reduced in intensity and direction, a non-prejudicial evaluation should be undertaken, comparing current results with original objectives, and focusing on the controversies and the range of topics concerned, from the environmental and cultural to the political and economic* (Petocz 1988: 87).

Transmigration is based on the assumption that the outer islands are 'underpopulated' and 'underdeveloped', yet in reality, these regions are the traditional homelands of many viable and vigorous societies which have developed sophisticated systems of resource sustainability (Thoolen 1986: 25). Indonesian law, which ostensibly recognises traditional land rights, completely subordinates these rights to State interests, and special legislation relating to transmigration further weakens them. In particular, Clause 17 of the Basic Forestry Act, Clarification Act No. 2823 of 1967, states: *'The rights of traditional law communities may not be allowed to stand in the way of the establishment of Transmigration sites'* (Thoolen 1986: 25).

Compensation payable to traditional owners is limited to payment for the destruction of their standing crops and buildings but not for the loss of their hunting, gathering and fishing territories, as in the case of the Amungme people of Ertsberg Mountain, the Freeport mining venture in Irian Jaya (Hyndman 1988: 285). In most cases the Indonesian government contended that no compensation was due to local peoples for their lands because facilities were to be provided for their use when the transmigration program was completed (*Indonesia Reports*, 22 October 1984).

Despite the numerous studies in Indonesia regarding transmigration, the officially proclaimed objective not discussed in official policy is *'the strengthening of national defence and security'* (Article 2, Law No 33, 1972 on the Basic Provisions of Transmigration, cited by Budiardjo 1986: 111). In Irian Jaya, transmigration serves an important political function (Burger 1987: 142) as settlements are placed along the border with Papua New Guinea or in places where opposition to Indonesian occupation has been strong; the overwhelming numbers of Javanese will create strong pro-Indonesian feelings and cause great practical difficulties for any future changes in the structure of internal government. The border regions, especially in the south, and Manokwari, where the Arfak people fought strongly to repulse the Indonesian army, and the central highland valleys, are some of these areas; the dispossession has caused the escalation in inter-ethnic tensions and the bloody conflict between the indigenous people and the military, and has been the cause of the continuing exodus of West Papuans into Papua New Guinea (Thoolen 1986: 25; Togarewa 1988: 17).

Former Transmigration Minister Martono admitted in 1985 the explicit strategic objective of settlements forming a *cordon sanitaire* when he announced that:

> *Preparations are under way for a programme of Transmigration sites based on the Saptamarga Model, for application in trouble-spots ...such as Natuna Island in Riau, the islands off the west coast of Sumatra, East Timor and the border region of West Sumatra. The largest area for emplacement of sites of this model is Irian Jaya where 13 sub-districts will be affected* (Martono, quoted in Budiardjo 1986: 111).

Refugees in the early 1980s also fled areas now heavily populated by transmigrants, who were either peasant farmers or military personnel forced to live in retirement in such settlements. The World Bank's President, Barber Conable, has made the *'extraordinary claim that the Bank knew of only one Transmigration site containing retired army personnel'* (Colchester 1987: 37). The resettlement of retired (and active) military personnel in transmigration sites, most heavily placed near the border, is official policy, has been regularly reported in the Indonesian press, discussed by writers and is freely remarked upon by visitors (see also Hardjono 1977; Otten 1986).

Transmigration projects include one retired army family in every ten non-service families; these men supply the 'leadership' lacking among the settlers who were often recruited from the less able urban unemployed. Prior to 1974 the Armed Forces actually established its own projects, however it soon became apparent that there was even less

integration with local people than occurred in the ordinary sites as the projects remained within the authority of the Forces concerned (Hardjono 1977: 98).

The settlement of army personnel has been particularly heavy along the southern Irian Jaya/PNG border, near the Merauke area. According to Indonesian maps, almost all the fertile land in Irian Jaya was planned for transmigration sites, with 3 million hectares round Merauke alone planned for divisions which would support a population of 4 million migrants; the indigenous population was about 70,000 (Dorney 1990: 268).

Although denying its involvement in supporting the transmigration program by its funding through the World Bank, EEC, and the United Nations (Colchester 1986a: 62), opposition parties within the Netherlands are strongly critical of Indonesian policies towards Irian Jaya generally, and transmigration in particular. The Indonesian choice of the 'enclave' model for settlements is explicitly recognised as being linked to 'geostrategic considerations' and an internal report notes quite clearly that, with renewed emphasis on national security:

> *it is no coincidence, nor incomprehensible, why it is the alleged underpopulated peripheral and boundary regions that are mentioned as attractive locations for Transmigration on a large scale* (cited by Colchester 1986a: 67).

As Monbiot noted (1989: 230), at the end of his journey through Irian Jaya, wherever there were rebels, there was transmigration.

Clearing out the land

Flying over the islands of Indonesia, including the western half of the landmass of New Guinea, the myth of rich, uninhabited tropical regions is persuasively perpetuated. This myth is accepted by Indonesian policy makers, although in fact little is known about land carrying capability over large areas (Jones 1979: 217). There are large areas of 'unused' land but in most instances the very factors that have limited economic development have proved to be obstacles to the successful establishment of transmigration projects (Hardjono 1977: 67).

The green parklike expanses of the southern Western Province, and over the border in southern Irian Jaya, are swampland inundated for much of the year. The indigenous people of these regions are hunters, fishers and horticulturalists who have survived by specialised techniques, moving over their traditional lands and harvesting by the seasons.

The settled high mountain valleys of Irian Jaya have been carefully farmed for millennia, utilising specialised techniques (Pospisil 1963). The successful habitation of the montane forests has relied on the exploitation of specific resources (small animals, birds, roots, fruits, nuts) by small stable populations. With large scale clearing, for either population centres, plantation economies or logging, these resources are destroyed, and homelands for the indigenous people are lost.

There is a concerted effort in some quarters to deny that transmigration can be linked to the refugee situation. Arndt (1986: 173) quotes Hastings (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 May 1983) as warning that *'the greater the development on the west side, the more it will attract PNG border dwellers and the more it will shake their allegiance to Port Moresby.'* Events of 1984 did not support that prediction ... *'neat intersecting roads, new houses with tin roofs, laid out in equally neat rows'* did not attract Melanesians from either side of the border. The fact that these settlements were built on their land was a cause for concern and alarm for indigenous West Papuans. The loss of land or total destruction of villages and urban centres is the major factor in creating a refugee situation anywhere. All the refugees from rural areas informed me that land take-over was their reason for leaving; some had attempted to fight for their land, others had left with their families ahead of the site clearing. Aditjondro, an Indonesian development program worker and population researcher based in Jayapura, cited the major causes for the refugee exodus of 1984 were economic factors associated with transmigration, including inadequate compensation for land and destruction of property, and fear of the military (Aditjondro 1987: 19).

The war is ignored as a causal factor even though fighting is also concerned with possession of land. In 1985, the then Australian Ambassador to Indonesia, Mr Bill Morrison, visited Irian Jaya accompanied by army personnel; he said that as a former politician, he could appreciate the motives behind transmigration (Dorney 1990: 268) but claimed that he could see no evidence of Indonesian land take-over. Despite his extraordinary comments, transmigration is an important government strategy, has been widely discussed in the Indonesian media, academic journals and reports, is highly visible to visitors, and has been criticised by Indonesian academics, organisations and workers (Budiardjo 1986: 111). Transmigration site clearing, road, bridge and dwelling construction is carried out by overseas companies including Australian firms with full government knowledge.

While rural refugees now residing at the East Awin relocation camp in the Western Province of Papua New Guinea assert that they left their homes because of pressure of transmigration, urban and political refugees were pressured into action by similar fears. The 1984 uprising which was marked by mass desertions of West Papuans from the Indonesian Army and an abortive flag-raising on February 13 resulted in 50 families fleeing the capital Jayapura; according to Dorney (1990: 266):

> *The 1984 uprising was precipitated by the then burgeoning transmigration program. During 1983 it has become increasingly clear that the influx of Javanese was having a profound impact on the traditional village people whose land was being taken over for transmigration settlements.*

The size of the transmigration sites, and the absence of plentiful arable land left the displaced West Papuans with little choice; Hardjono (1977: 89) had noted that:

> *in the face of the natural limitations that exist in Irian Jaya, settlements would have to be on a huge scale to have any impact. This would be self-defeating in itself, for the lack of local markets means that the demand for agricultural products is limited.*

Despite the lack of local markets, large areas have been cleared, in many regions barely supporting the transmigrants, who move into the surrounding forests and clear and burn in desperate efforts to survive (Secrett 1986: 82). The region around Merauke and north to Tanahmerah and Mindiptanah had been surveyed in the early phases of transmigration planning, but according to Smith and Hewison (1986: 206), only a small amount of actual settlement had taken place. Some families, including ethnic Chinese, had left for Papua New Guinea in the 1950s and early 1960s and large numbers of West Papuans fled over the border in 1984 when migrants began arriving. Since then, photographs of the area (taken in 1989) show large tracts of land under settlement. Further photographs, taken of the area from the ground, show the housing and imported livestock (Figs. 5 and 6). These sites are considered to be successful, although Monbiot (1989: 228) described some sites around Merauke as devastated, and most early ones abandoned.

The refugees from this region, the Yonggom (or Muyu) and the Ningerum, make up the largest numbers of refugees in the camps but because of traditional ties and movement across what is now the international border, were termed 'border crossers'. Yet these people were forced off their land or fled ahead of the onslaught of transmigrants. The earliest West Papuan refugees came from the areas first established as transmigration sites (Nabire, Merauke, Sorong, Manokwari, Jayapura/Arso); nationalistic

resistance movements were also organised around these areas, and they have continued to be trouble spots for the Indonesian army.

The Indonesian army presence has always been heavy in the southern border region and a Kostrad battalion operates from there (Osborne 1986; Mitton 1985; Sands, pers. comm. 1978). Isaac Hindom, the former governor of Irian Jaya, was reported in the Jakarta press following a tour of the area, as finding it depopulated; 5000 of the 8,500 Mindiptanah subdistrict had fled, 4,400 of a population of 6,100 had left Waropko subdistrict and whole villages were deserted (*Tapol Bulletin 64*, 1984 cited by Smith and Hewison 1986: 207). Hindom, described by Rumbiak (1988: 10) as the mouthpiece of the Indonesian colonial government in Jakarta, and intent on hastening the obliteration of the Melanesian people, reported this situation despite his official position in the Indonesian government.

The indigenous people who remain in Irian Jaya are deprived of their contemporary humanity, often being labelled 'stone-age.' The Indonesian government imposes social-Darwinist categorisations on outer island people. They insist that their subjects are not racially differentiated - all are 'Indonesian', and no special allowances are made for the cultural practices of specific ethnic groups. All people are classified on a four level ranking according to their level of attainment of Javanese cultural standards; the 'stone-age primitives' of Irian Jaya are on the bottom rank, the 'pre-villages.' Being falsely designated 'pre-village', nomadic, or alien implies the West Papuan people had no cultivated land or villages, rendering appropriation of these unproblematic. The populations that make up the 'pre-villages' and some belonging to 'traditional' villages, are classified by the government as *suku suku terasing* - isolated and alien peoples, or *suku suku terbelakang* - isolated and backward peoples (Colchester 1986: 89). Melanesians in New Guinea were settled agriculturalists before the first rice in Southeast Asia was cultivated, probably in Thailand about four thousand years ago.

'Stone-age', 'backward', 'primitive' people are useful as cheap labour. In 1991, travelling on bogus business credentials, film-maker Groom visited the Asmat people of southeast Irian Jaya, and found that they had been systematically beaten and killed by the Indonesians who used them as slave labour ... *'they see them as animals who should be brought down from their treehouses and civilised'* (*West Papua Update* 11: April 1991). Travel guides and official Year Books published in Indonesia have for many years

depicted the people of Irian Jaya with total disregard for fact, ignoring the Melanesian West Papuans. Javanese type people wearing extraordinary 'folk costumes' are depicted as the 'native' people of Irian Jaya. This Indonesian construction of history prepares for a future absence of indigenous people or alternatively sees them as so sub-human as to deny them an existence.

The business of constructing sites

In 1986 a comprehensive study *Transmigrasi: Indonesian Resettlement Policy, 1965 - 1985* was issued by the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA). The author, Mariel Otten, stated as her main purpose:

> *to expose the myths and tell the tale as it is. The information on which the document is based, has been largely derived from Indonesian newspapers. The fact that the press in Indonesia is subject to censorship suggests that the reality is even more tragic than described by Indonesian journalists. Additional and very useful information has been gathered from rather critical but seldom published reports from the World Bank. Although the information sources could be called 'neutral', this document is not written with the pretension of being objective, as it is in my view impossible to be 'objective' towards the military dictatorship of General Suharto* (Otten 1986a: 9).

Otten described her sources as 'neutral'; even describing some World Bank documents as 'rather critical'. Yet World Bank documents show that the Bank is aware of the deficiencies in the implementation of its programs, certainly critics of the Bank sponsored program have publicised its complicity in corrupt practises, and consultants and businesses involved in transmigration schemes have become enmeshed in the corrupt bureaucracy. Aditjondro (1989: 155), was told by an official in the Governor's office that project officers received up to 17 per cent pay-off from the contractors, and spent most of the government funds flying between Jakarta and Irian Jaya. Overseas contractors and consultants working on transmigration sites accept that such pay-offs are a normal component of tenders, bureaucratic approvals and project implementation (Jamieson, pers. comm. 1989).

Firms involved in transmigration site preparation also found many difficulties in carrying out physical work; aerial photographs were often out of date and Indonesian officials had difficulty comprehending that the real situation on the ground was different from that which appeared on a photograph. Consultants often pulled out of site preparation projects through frustration or sheer impractability; as Hardjono admitted (1986: 34):

> *results of studies are usually highly generalised, particularly since those responsible have often been guided by superficial similarities between locations and have not investigated each proposed site.*

Unsuitable sites included steep hillsides, gullies, swamps or sand dunes, in general, the land which has not been suitable for agricultural usage. One consultant, attempting to explain to an Indonesian military official that the terrain shown on a map contained many cliffs and rocky gullies and would not be suitable for splitting up into numerous sites, was told that inequality was part of Allah's plan; the settlers who were allotted the unsuitable sites would have to leave and work for the more fortunate settlers - in this way a real-life situation would be maintained (A. Jamieson, pers.comm. 1989). Where sites have been successful, the Indonesian entrepreneurs (often from South and Southeast Sulawesi where a familiar attitude exists to Irian Jaya) sell their holdings, return, often several times, and take up another site. These second time settlers include spontaneous migrants whose aggression and economic domination has caused much aggravation to the local West Papuans (Aditjondro 1986: 168).

Spontaneous migrants are not 'spontaneous' at all, according to Wirosuhardjo, Director of the Demographic Institute of the University of Indonesia, rather, they are:

> *not just people who move by themselves but rather those who move within the framework of the law and are provided land by the government but nothing more. Migrants from Java to the outer islands who just come to buy land there are not termed transmigrants ... what some observers term "spontaneous transmigrants" are not transmigrants as normally understood in Indonesia. They are 'uncontrolled migrants'* (quoted by Otten 1986b: 75).

These 'spontaneous transmigrants' are supported by the government to stimulate transmigration, while cutting costs and keeping control of the migration process, and for providing a labour force for the cash-crop plantations. In a blatant contradiction of transmigration policy Martono announced in 1984 that the government intended to concentrate on setting up cash-crop estates rather than give out land to settlers for subsistence agriculture (Otten 1986b: 75). Tree crops would assist in land conservation, retarding erosion, and the plantation companies would pay transport costs.

Transmigration sites were not planned to impinge on areas where forestry concessions existed; these were often held secretly by government officials and their existence caused great problems for foreign firms attempting to carry out projects. In an

attempt to explain why work was not progressing in some areas, the Minister for Forests was forced to state in the Indonesian 'parliament' in 1987 that *transmigrasi* was destroying productive forests, a contradiction of stated government policy. Where marginal areas were available, access was not possible, for example, a bridge had been constructed in the wrong area, forcing foreign engineering companies to abandon proposed sites and proceed where they could obtain access (A. Jamieson, pers. comm.1989). The planning of sites, especially in Irian Jaya, was so bad that in the mid-1980s Jakarta introduced a plan called Second Stage Development, a euphemism for rehabilitating sites which were abandoned due to unsuitability (Schwarz 1991: 23). The failure of so many sites, and the total disregard to local land-owners rights had caused problems - including the refugee situation - which were difficult to stifle.

Money from the World Bank was often siphoned off by high and middle ranking Indonesian officials; the full amounts not reaching the outside consultancy firms who were attempting to carry out the work. Firm managers did not have access to high ranking officials and were forced to negotiate with lower levels of bureaucracy; consultants were forced to work in cooperation with bogus companies who handled World Bank funds and when payments did not come through there was no one to whom they could appeal. Firms were often dismissed on trumped up charges, after work was partly completed, and other firms with less ethical concerns were then invited to take over the projects (A. Jamieson, pers.comm. 1989).

World Bank officials in Washington DC have admitted privately when confronted by overseas company officials that what tallies up on their computer screens regarding money and expenditure may not be the actuality but their brief does not include interference with the local dispersal of funds. As Hayter and Watson demonstrate (1985: 222-246), World Bank finance can be deployed among entrepreneurs in many ways: over-invoicing for imported machinery, fertilisers, pesticides and spare-parts; faking or inflating fees and commissions to foreign firms or individuals; paying excessive salaries to themselves and family members, and bogus companies; selling off machinery or forcing foreign companies to pay for tendering rights; laying off workers and technicians, and cutting back on planned acreage in proposed sites. In short, World Bank money is used for the financial well-being of local elites.

In Indonesia, officials were only concerned with the planning of transmigration sites, and the actual construction was delayed or subcontracted to local firms who had no misgivings about the lack of suitability of sites. The shocking actuality - undrained land or tidal swamps and infertile soil, poorly constructed shacks, no drinking water, no infrastructure, no maintenance of supplies, no contact with the outside world, deserted sites and desperate settlers, are testimony to the ineptness of the corrupt and disorganised perpetrators of the transmigration scheme. Despite the corruption and mismanagement, the violations of human rights are not the result of poor planning and implementation at the local level but are inherent in the legislation and policy of the transmigration program (Thoolen 1986: 25).

The reality of the impossibility of lessening overpopulation in Java and other areas by exporting people has become obvious but transmigration is an entrenched institution whose infrastructure involves many government departments and private companies. The spin-offs from the huge amounts of World Bank finance have sustained many businesses and many individuals. The success of the original purpose of transmigration seems to matter little, rather, aid money must continue and appear to be utilised properly, and it remains a priority that strategically important areas be filled with Indonesians loyal to the government.

Transmigration settlements - land appropriation and destruction.

The Ecologist, an established and widely circulated English journal, in collaboration with the human rights organisations *Survival International* and Tapol, produced *Banking on Disaster*, a special issue on Indonesia's transmigration program. This special issue was launched to the world press in Washington in May 1986, making it public knowledge that the World Bank is funding one of the biggest movements of people in history (Colchester 1987: 37). Its findings were that the transmigration policies were responsible for enormous human and environmental abuse and had caused the exodus of West Papuan refugees. At the same time the subject was raised in the US Senate by *Survival International* and independently, by the coalition of twenty Indonesian NGOs.

This concerted action received responses from the Indonesian government; they angrily denied the allegations yet Martono, then Minister for Transmigration, admitted that forests were being cut down - this, he said, was normal development in this day and age (after Brazil, Indonesia has the second highest rate of deforestation according to

Rainforest News 7, June 1991). He also acknowledged the assimilationist intent of the program, claiming that the transmigration program highlights social integration so that racial differences and differences between ethnic groups will no longer exist - thus making it impossible for one group to colonise another. He did admit, however, that conflict between the two groups was inevitable. Where disputes over landrights were engendered, the process could be facilitated by 'slipping' the locals into transmigration sites as 'local transmigrants' (Proceedings of the Meeting between the Department of Transmigration and the Inter-Governmental Group on Indonesia March 20, 1985 cited by Colchester 1986: 105). In fact, transmigration has not assisted in the promotion of national unity and security, but has exacerbated local tensions in many regions.

Some criticism of the scheme has come from Indonesian NGOs representing numerous conservation and environmental groups. These organisations perceive the country to be part of Indonesia and see the degradation and looting of the land as despoiling their own heritage; little concern is expressed for the indigenous people. Members of conservation groups often belong to the educated middle-classes and their intervention has no effect on the actions of the military government, except that under severely repressive 'society laws' the Government can dissolve non-government organisations at a whim. Even so their point of view is of interest as it consolidates Indonesian NGOs with the ecological or green movements - and demonstrates internal dissent.

Swidden agriculture, practised throughout much of the island of New Guinea is despised by the Javanese, as well as the intensive agriculture in the great highland valleys which has sustained the Melanesian people for thousands of years. In the Baliem Valley and in the Paniai Lakes area natural vegetation was cleared long ago and gardens are permanent, not because the land is naturally rich, but because the highland agriculturists understood how to make it productive. Limestone areas are less arable than they appear and Pospisil (1963) who worked in the Paniai (then Wissel Lakes) area reported fallow periods of eight to twelve years on the cleared slopes. However by laborious draining and mounding of the silt and clay loam known as mud-bank farming, the successive crops and permanent farmland were sustained.

The soils of Irian Jaya are generally poor in nutrients and are subject to leaching once the protective forest cover is removed (up to 8000 millimetres rain per year). The

only area that has had volcanic rejuvenation is the Vogelkop, in the north west. Among specialists there is agreement that the carrying capacity of the country is vastly over-estimated (Donner 1987: 11). The Indonesians were quick to move into these agricultural valleys as well as moving settlers onto the cleared rainforest sites which have attracted the interest of the conservationists. Official estimates of ravaged rainforest areas do not take in to account the unofficial migrants, nor the people who have abandoned their failed sites and moved into the forest to become, like the people to whom they are supposedly teaching farming methods, shifting agriculturalists who destroy more forest each year than the officially cleared transmigration sites (Secrett 1986: 84).

In selected transmigration sites, prior to the arrival of the bulldozers and the new settlers, the customary owners were warned that any unfenced land would pass from their control to that of the new government. The warning signs were in Indonesian language (Straatman, pers. comm. 1977). That the West Papuans could not speak, read or understand Indonesian made no difference; this was further evidence that they were 'primitive' and in need of the benefits of a superior culture.

Traditional owners were moved off land around the town of Wamena in the Baliem Valley soon after the invasion; the Dani people 'sold' their traditional land and villages in exchange for housing in the new model villages, where they were instructed in new farming techniques which included the use of fertiliser and pesticides, items never required in the thousands of years of agricultural production in this region. The new housing estates take no account of traditional patterns of domesticity; men and women and children sleep together in one small house, fires are forbidden inside despite the cold nights at 1600 metres and clothes are supposed to be worn. As in other parts of the country this senseless edict results in skin diseases, boils and severe chills including pneumonia as the people do not remove the clothes despite frequent downpours (Mitton 1983: 227). Despite punishment and ridicule, many of the highland people have retained their traditional clothing.

It has been possible for several years to obtain the special pass needed to travel to Wamena to see this model farming community - passes are necessary because the inland valleys are 'so primitive', according to the military government. Recently Wamena has been included on official tours of Irian Jaya and has been visited by overseas medical and scientific teams, although from time to time it goes back on the restricted areas list.

In 1988 the Indonesian government announced that it intended to colonise more of the central highlands, sending more Javanese settlers to transmigration sites there (*Times of PNG* 4-10 August 1988). Since 1989 Indonesian 'persuader' teams have been moving the Hulpa and Yali people out of their villages to relocation areas near Wamena. According to Hogan (1992: 4), Freeport Indonesia helicopters have moved 600 people from this supposedly famine stricken area as an humanitarian gesture, rather than ship in food. Indonesian officials claimed the local people 'forgot to plant crops' but it seems likely that planting was disrupted due to earlier attempts in 1989 to relocate villagers, who live in Freeport's new exploration area of 6.5 million acres in the central highlands. Earthquakes have been a useful natural phenomenon in Irian Jaya used by the Indonesian government to mask the results of their actions or neglect: the attempts to remove Hulpa and Yali people from their land to facilitate mining exploration reported by Hogan (1992a: 4) is portrayed as a humanitarian gesture. Freeport (Mining) helicopters removed the supposedly famine-stricken people in what was a continuation of the removal program begun after the earth-quake of August 1989, but the earthquake was not centred in this area.

The many thousands of West Papuans killed during the massacres in the Baliem Valley in 1976-77 - the OPM claimed several thousand, the Indonesians admitted around 900 (Osborne 1985a: 72) were supposedly the victims of earthquakes, according to Indonesian government sources at the time. There was a severe earthquake in 1976 in the central highlands (Mitton 1983: 114) and in 1977 it was being blamed for the empty villages and the depopulation over a wide area. Freeport likewise moved Amungme people from the original mine site in 1978 following fierce resistance which resulted in destruction of villages and mass killings (Hyndman 1988: 286).

The whole central region of Irian Jaya, from the Paniai Lakes in the west, along the entire Baliem River valley system and surrounding ranges, maintained a resistance, both to land appropriation and cultural destruction, that saw episodes of violent fighting from the 1960s, through the 1970s and 80s. Some of these highlanders, forced off their land in the 1960s, retreated into the bush and lived off the land for several years before the long hard journey to reach the Papua New Guinea border; unlike the Yonggom and Ningerum they had no traditional ties with the border people except a strong determination to resist Indonesian imperialism and a commitment to self-determination. The highland West Papuans have not forgotten the disastrous events that forced then off

their land; in their highland styled village at East Awin I was shown hand-drawn maps of their homelands and symbolic artefacts, and graphic representations of the fighting that forced their exodus (interviews with Kaleb and Jakob, Wamena Village 1989). Away from repressive Indonesian military rule, they have reverted to traditional lifestyle with the men's house prominent in village life.

Transmigration settlements - reality

The transmigrants, with the possible exception of the military personnel who are placed strategically in settlements close to the border, are also the victims of expansionist ambitions. Although the transmigrants from Sulawesi have travelled as spontaneous migrants, and some successful small business people have returned after visiting Java, many Javanese are terrified of being sent to Irian Jaya (or East Timor). This fear is reflected by some young members of the armed forces who regard service in these places as 'a term in hell' (Sri Santiawardi, pers. comm. 1985). The Indonesian proverb quoted by Osborne (1985: 127) *'if it rains gold in another place, and only stones here, it is still better in Java'* was coined a long time before transmigration was imposed on inner islanders but sums up what the people feel about their own land. In most of the transmigration areas people are worse off than they were in Java (despite Arndt's optimism) and have the added trauma of loss of family ties - they are living in what is to them a physical and cultural wasteland. According to Otten (1986b: 76), the migrants have gone 'from poverty to bare subsistence', reducing many to penury. Arndt (1986: 162) explains that *'in the past fifteen years, transmigration has been seen by Indonesian policy makers primarily as having a welfare objective, to raise the standard of living of the migrants themselves and perhaps, by reducing the number of mouths to feed, that of their home villages in Java.'* However, it is doubtful that all 'policy makers' consider the welfare objective as peasants have been forcibly removed from their land in Java to make room for the construction of more golf-courses (Sri Santiawarda, pers. comm. 1991).

Plantation sites in Aceh in Sumatra have experienced problems which flared into violent massacres during 1989-90 (TAPOL 102, December 1990) and in Irian Jaya settlers live in fear of the local inhabitants as well as in isolation and poverty. This fear is based on more than the usual fear of the unknown; transmigration sites have been attacked by former landowners or the OPM, sometimes leaving migrant settlers dead or wounded (Monbiot 1989: 225). Much to the embarrassment of the Indonesian

government one official tour party of foreign journalists to sites in Irian Jaya in 1986 (which followed a more successful trip for politicians to Sulawesi) arrived immediately after an attack by West Papuan nationalists. The resulting press reports of the incident were disappointing for the Indonesian government (*The Economist* 15 November 1986, *The Guardian* 12 December 1986, 2 January 1986).

In October 1986 the major Jakarta daily *Sinar Harapan* (second largest circulation in the country) which had carried many articles critical of transmigration, was closed down on government orders. *The Australian*, a conservative newspaper, has been banned in Indonesia and all other major Australian newspapers have been banned at some time or another. In January 1991 the Australian Broadcasting Corporation held talks with Indonesian officials on the prospects of re-opening the Jakarta bureau, 10 years after the last ABC correspondent was based there (*Courier Mail* 12 January 1991).

The failure of many transmigration sites has been blamed by the Indonesian Department of Social Welfare on the lack of perseverance and laziness of the migrants, but as Hardjono admits (1977: 69), the sites selected have been quite unsuitable for agriculture. In 1988-89 at least 1,500 houses were abandoned; the first transmigrants to desert their blocks for the towns are the urban slum dwellers picked up by the Social Affairs department (Aditjondro 1989: 168), in a 20th century version of press-ganging. With no knowledge of agricultural practices, these unwilling urban transmigrants have little hope of success on the barren land. As Aditjondro has noted (1989: 168), the economic domination and aggressiveness of the spontaneous migrants causes a high degree of aggravation to the indigenous people, including the use of alcoholic drinks and temporary 'marriages' to village girls to secure land.

Settlers have been the victims of violence and poverty as well as bureaucratic corruption. According to Indonesian human rights groups, women have been forced into prostitution, not occasional occurrences, but as permanent sex-workers, in Arso and in Kurik 1 near Merauke. In 1985, 54 transmigrant women were caught by Merauke police, 80 from Kurik in 1988, and 500 are alleged to be working in Sorong (*Setiakawan* Jan-June 1990). Aditjondro (1989: 168), gives similar numbers and notes that a side-effect of the failure of transmigration sites has been the spread of sexually transmitted diseases.

Otten (1986a: 218) quotes Indonesian sources that admit the disappearance of Rp 40 million destined for the Koya site near Jayapura in Irian Jaya, and equipment - sewing machines, television sets and a generator were taken by the local mosque or sold to officials. The loss of these luxury items may not have been as important to the settlers as the fact that seed and fertilisers promised by the Indonesian government failed to arrive. They have been forced to move into the local forest to scrounge for food, in many areas emulating the hunting and gathering modes of subsistence of the 'tribals' they are supposed to educate into the 'higher' mode of Javanese cultural practices. The change to the supposed superiority of Javanese rice growing culture has caused difficulties wherever transmigration sites exist; the highlands people who were settled crop-growers did not require rice, and many years of overseas supported agricultural effort has proved in Papua New Guinea that rice is a difficult crop; where rice has always grown successfully, around Merauke for example, the region is covered by transmigration sites (see Figure 5) and many thousands of refugees have been forced to flee to Papua New Guinea.

Nabire, which is the administrative headquarters for the Paniai region, is the largest transmigration site away from the Papua New Guinea border. This site appeared successful at first, with quickly established gardens; following extensive field work there in 1972, Garnaut and Manning (1974) described it as a successful site supplying vegetables to the town yet visitors have reported that within a couple of years the gardens were run down, supplies of fertiliser promised by the Indonesian authorities had not eventuated and everywhere people begged visitors for the loan of enough money to get them back to Java (Straatman, pers.comm. 1977). Arndt (1986: 171) quoted Hastings description of the Nabire scheme, and the one at Timika, as 'fairly disastrous'. Garnaut and Manning (1974) were correct in their assessment of the rice growing potential of the settlements around Merauke (rice had already been established there by the Dutch), but events have shown their previous assessments to be incorrect. It has always been known that there are problems with growing rice on the northern side of the cordillera which do not occur in the southern regions, however tremendous losses have been caused since 1984 by exotic rice pests brought in by the transmigrants. More than 1,500 hectares of paddy-fields in Jayapura, Paniai, Manokwari and Sorong districts have been ruined by the green leafhopper and tungro virus (Aditjondro 1989: 166).

An extremely serious pest, the coffee berry borer was found established in Irian Jaya in 1981; 4000 citrus trees in Arso have been destroyed in an attempt to halt the expansion of a newly introduced citrus pest (brought in by transmigrants from Central Java according to *Kompas* 16 April 1986); two serious citrus diseases were attacking trees in Sandaun Province in 1991, according to the Provincial Tree Crops Officer, both were brought into PNG by refugees (*Times of PNG*, 5 September 1991, in *West Papua Update* 13, November 1991. A pest of bananas has spread from Asia, through Irian Jaya to PNG and destroyed many garden plantations in areas where banana is a staple (Mamose 1988: 4). A dangerous bee pest discovered in PNG which could destroy the apiary industry was identified at the Biosystematics and Beneficial Insects Institute in Maryland, USA as brought in by transmigrants from Java (Delfinado-Baker *et al* 1989: 443).

Aditjondro (1989: 167) notes the protein losses suffered by the remaining local inhabitants: traditional game such as wallabies and pigs, and deer originally introduced by the Dutch and extremely prolific in the Western Province of Papua New Guinea, are depleted due to clearing for sites, and by migrants armed with guns who hunt for the commercial market. Aditjondro also notes a 'socio-ecological problem' (1989: 167) in the transmigration sites, the misuse of chemical pesticides; *Klerat* was distributed to transmigrants everywhere to combat the rat plague caused by excessive tree clearing and has caused poisoning and one reported death, and DDT has been misused to spray vegetable crops. These are common well-documented problems of 'development' throughout rural mainland Asia and Indonesia that did not exist with the subsistence culture of indigenous West Papuans. They have been introduced to Irian Jaya as part of the transmigrant invasion.

Human diseases have arrived with the transmigrants, but are largely ignored by the Indonesian administration. The fatal cysticercosis carried by humans and pigs, and brought in by the pigs from Bali, was only fully documented after British medicos noticed an epidemic of severe burns from the Paniai Lakes region, caused by cysticercosis sufferers falling into fires during severe epileptic fits (Bending and Catford 1983; Desowitz 1981; Hyndman 1987). Many hundreds of West Papuans have died from this disease which is caused by eating cyst infected pig meat; the cysts lodge in the human brain causing epilepsy and death. Pigs identified as harbouring the cysts were destroyed in Oksibil near the border in 1984 and it has been suggested from results of surveys that the disease has been carried into Papua New Guinea with refugees (Barnish 1984, 1985)

however, because of the movement of refugees it has been very difficult for medical workers to complete research in the field. Although government and mission medical officers continue to treat sufferers in the epidemic areas around the Paniai Lakes district, world health agencies have not continued to monitor cysticercosis within Irian Jaya (Desowitz, pers. comm. 1988).

Shistosoma mekongi, another human parasitic disease previously not known in New Guinea, was reported in Papua New Guinea by the Madang Institute of Medical Research in 1986. Migration from Java and Bali has increased the chance of rabies, one of the most dreaded killers of humans and animals, and foot and mouth disease arriving on the New Guinea mainland (Cribb 1988: 17). More recently, a fatal mystery disease affected 800 people and more than 466 people died in the Oksibil subdistrict, near the international border. Only six of the dead were positively diagnosed as having malaria. The head of the local health unit, Dr Abu Rajabto, said the outbreak of the disease had been overshadowed by events following an earthquake, also the impact of the diseases was compounded by the poor nutritional status of the villagers (*Jakarta Post* 30 May 1991, cited in *West Papua Update 12*, July 1991: 4).

In October 1986 the Washington based Environmental Defence Fund, writing to the World Bank, focused attention on the economic unviability of transmigration settlements. Quoting the Bank's own reviews, it noted that 90 percent of settlements established in the third Five-year plan had an economic rate of return that was either negative or less than 1 percent. The average income of migrants is lower than the average income in Java. A higher proportion of people (20 percent) were living at or below subsistence level than in Java (15 percent). Included among the recommendations for changes in the program was an independent review of the impact of transmigration on indigenous peoples and the implementation of land reform; most of the Indonesian NGOs did not consider that this displacement of 'tribals' was important although more recently Indonesian activists have addressed the matter, alleging 'genocide' against the people of Irian Jaya (Anon, *Setiakawan* 4-5: 1990).

Attempting to alleviate the uncontrolled population pressure of Java by shipping even a few of the millions of Javanese to the outer islands is like attempting to empty the ocean with a bucket. According to Arndt (1986, 162), *'even an ambitious transmigration programme involving the movement of 200,000 persons a year would be*

equivalent to only one tenth of the annual increase in Java's population'. It does however have some quantifiable effects, and these include the wholesale destruction of part of the world's remaining rainforest, which is also the home of indigenous people; it pushes people off land that has sustained them, but is unsuitable for immigrants who do not understand the careful techniques required for sustainability. In many places, the settlers are forced in to an erratic existence as landless shifting cultivators as they abandon the infertile, denuded land to fight for an existence in the shrinking forests or move to the impoverished shanty-towns of the urban centres. Most tragically, transmigration has created a body of landless West Papuan refugees. In 1984, the first of the eventual 10,000 to 12,000 refugees left Irian Jaya and crossed the border into Papua New Guinea, forcing the acknowledgment of problems the Indonesian government had tried to hide from the outside world.

The West Papuans have no legally sanctioned political voice. They maintain contact with the outside world through the OPM, whose Newsletter was printed and circulated through a Vanuatu office for several years; exiles resident in other countries and refugees in Papua New Guinea who avail themselves of a freer press. Within Irian Jaya the OPM, with the support of rural people, continues to resist the occupation by fighting. Outside, there are activists from many walks of life who continue to attempt to report events from inside Irian Jaya, despite the entrenched government position.

There has always been a difference in the reports given by visitors returning from Irian Jaya; official visitors are taken to 'model' sites and usually present positive findings. I spoke to a senior aid worker in Canberra in late 1989 who had just returned from Wamena. She asked me why the refugees had left Wamena - it was such a lovely place! However, despite her favourable impressions, her report for the agency, which had to be vetted by the Indonesian government before it was released, did not pass their censorship standards and was held up indefinitely.

'Non-political' visitors such as medical, veterinary and other scientific workers, and engineers and surveyors who work on transmigration sites experience the reality of life in Irian Jaya and are a useful source of information; as most want to continue working with the Indonesian government they do not broadcast their experiences. I have been shown government reports and photographs that support *The Ecologist's* charges to the World Bank. Photographs, particularly those taken over several visits, show that

transmigration sites in the more successful areas (around Merauke for example) are growing steadily while the unsuitable sites languish in increasingly desolation. Unofficial visitors like BBC film producer George Monbiot give a realistic insight into the appalling conditions for West Papuans, as do film-makers Kirsty Sword and Tracy Groom; their first-hand experience and graphic evidence is valuable, reinforcing the claims of many visitors to Irian Jaya.

Despite the attempts of some officials to deny that transmigration was a cause of dislocation, again and again refugees from all parts of Irian Jaya stressed to me that land taken for transmigration sites or the threat of impending takeover and site preparation had forced their departure. Fighting in rural areas was almost always over land. Their real fear of Indonesian officials was shown in a small incident involving the arrival of the new priest at the East Awin camp. Brothers from the Montfort mission had not explained that the new arrival was from the Philippines. When refugees saw him they panicked and fled into the bush to hide. This spontaneous action demonstrated that even in the relative sanctuary of a camp within Papua New Guinea, West Papuans had not forgotten the fear that pushed them out of their lands ahead of the invasive transmigration schemes.

CHAPTER SEVEN

REFUGEES - REPATRIATION OR RESETTLEMENT

Where is the Melanesian Alliance - doesn't your very name suggest a positive fearless campaign for the freedom of self-expression and spiritual unity of all Melanesian people? Where are Samana, Narokobi, Momis, who once fired the hearts of our people to stand up as a proud race, for each other?...every Papua New Guinean who believes in values of honesty and truth, I urge you all, let's stand up together and free our brothers in West Irian from the shackles of oppression. Soru Subam *(Post-Courier* 8 January 1992)

Papua New Guinea government policy was influenced by fear that the granting of asylum to refugees would be regarded by Indonesia as a hostile act. The UNHCR was willing to assist following the 1984 wave of fleeing refugees but was denied access to them by the Papua New Guinea government (Smith and Hewison 1986: 212). From the outset, Indonesia wanted the refugees repatriated, and although Namaliu had suggested to Foreign Affairs Minister Mochtar in Jakarta that the UNHCR supervise the repatriation, Mochtar rejected the idea, and Namaliu accepted this (Harris and Brown 1985: 30). However, in May 1984 two UNHCR representatives arrived in Port Moresby and it was announced that the repatriation process could not start until the officials pronounced themselves satisfied with all aspects of it. UNHCR resident chief in Moresby in his first public pronouncement on the repatriation issue, stated that:

This is in order that we can assess (the border-crossers) situation, and also satisfy ourselves the repatriation, if and when the exercise begins, is truly voluntary.

As Harris and Brown note (1985: 31), to have permitted this would have been to acknowledge that the 'border-crossers' were indeed refugees, and thus potentially not liable to repatriation. This outcome would have undermined the Papua New Guinea government's policy on the matter - that the border-crossers had to be repatriated, although at this stage Namaliu was still pressing for UNHCR involvement. Any resolution of the matter was halted by a diplomatic note from Indonesia demanding a list of the names of all the refugees, in addition to the names of the political refugees; a threatening act, and an impossible task to fulfil. In retaliation to Papua New Guinea's non-compliance, Indonesia withdrew from the planned 26-27 May 1984 meeting in Vanimo to discuss repatriation. Before the scheduled date of the meeting, Indonesian military operations recommenced in the border region and more refugees crossed over the border (Harris and Brown 1985: 33).

In August, Namaliu made a blunt statement to the UN General Assembly in which he was critical of the Indonesian position; the Indonesian Ambassador Alatas reacted accordingly (Harris and Brown 1985: 53), but despite a cooling of relations between the two countries, Mochtar arrived in Port Moresby in October to sign the Border Agreement which would signal the beginning of repatriation. From this time, the situation deteriorated on all fronts: verification teams moved into the border camps to ascertain which 'border-crossers' would be repatriated, but frightened refugees attacked Indonesian team members, forcing the teams to withdraw; police riot squads were moved into border areas where refugees were resisting attempts to remove them, and Indonesian soldiers again violated Papua New Guinea territorial sovereignty. This was only the beginning of the long-drawn out saga of repatriation or resettlement that has gone on for eight years, and remains unresolved.

A further complication was the crucial negotiations in October 1985 between Australia and Indonesia to settle the seabed boundary between the two countries in preparation for the exploitation by both countries of the rich oil fields of the Timor Sea, and *'there were indications that the talks could be upset for about 13,000 refugees had only recently fled from Irian Jaya and were crowded together in camps on the Papua New Guinea border'* (Brunton 1986: 35).

The Timor Gap was first discussed jointly in 1979 and by 1984 the parties were approaching an agreement about how they would share the resource. As stated by jurist academic Brunton, according to international law, Indonesia did not own the resource or have any legitimate claim to it. The difficulty of Indonesia's lack of *de jure* sovereignty over East Timor and the embarrassment over Australia's unresolved position regarding the takeover had to be finalised once and for all in a negotiated settlement. The 'right' atmosphere could not be maintained *'by reminders of executions, killings, torture or the imprisonment of dissidents'* (Brunton 1986: 35).

Brunton further detailed the arrival in Australia, in June 1984, of West Papuan Mathew Mayer, and in July 1985, the five West Papuans who landed on an Australian island in the Torres Strait and applied for refugee status and permanent residence. Permanent residency was denied, and a decision on refugee status was delayed by referring it to the Determination of Refugee Status Committee. Mayer's application for political asylum was *'effectively buried in lengthy court proceedings'* (Brunton 1986: 35) and complicated by claims and counter claims

regarding his connections with Papua New Guinea's NIO and Australia's JIO (Osborne 1985: 112). In late 1991, Mayer's position was still unresolved; the ex-helicopter pilot who was a high profile OPM fighter is still living a day-to-day existence in Brisbane, Australia, and jokingly repeating the reason for his predicament *'I am the key that would have opened the floodgates'* (Meyer, pers. comm. 1989)

Then Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bill Hayden, and the Immigration Minister, Chris Hurford, reacted strongly with dire predictions of 'an uncontrolled flood of refugees' (*Sydney Morning Herald* 10 July 1985) and the media eagerly repeated this line for several months, distracting attention away from the Timor Gap negotiations (Brunton 1986: 35).

Brunton further asserts that the deportation, and subsequent murders of supposed OPM leaders from Papua New Guinea was part of this frantic effort of appeasement by the Australian government. These were the deportations of 'political' refugees from the Sandaun Blackwater camp, following secret meetings in Vanimo on 26 September 1985 that revealed:

> *that behind the cloak of an apparent lack of clear PNG government policy regarding refugees, the police and intelligence services are resolutely pursuing a policy of deportation with the approval of the Foreign Affairs Ministry* (*Tapol* Bulletin 72, November 1985).

Brunton agreed with the correctness of this assessment, and asserted that the real relationship between Australia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea was tied directly into the Papua New Guinea decision-making process and involving senior bureaucratic officials - political authorisation had been, in the past, a matter of routine (1986: 36).

During the early hours of the morning of 12 October 1985, 16 refugees were taken by Papua New Guinea police from the Blackwater camps and flown over the border to Jayapura; the frantic struggles of the refugees when they realised the plane was heading for Jayapura forced it to return to Vanimo; however, after being beaten into submission by police on the ground, they were handcuffed and loaded back onto the plane. The Vanimo riots of 13 October followed the forced deportations; refugees were tear-gassed and arrested. These events were reported widely, and help explain the fear expressed by Blackwater inmates regarding any later movements to other camps.

The co-operation between Indonesia and Papua New Guinea in orchestrating these events is known, and the least that can be said of the Australian government is that it knew of the plans and did nothing (Brunton 1986: 37). The timing of the negotiations between Indonesia and Australia gave Australia a strong motive to appease Indonesian sensibilities and while overtly Australia maintained the view that the matter of refugees was a bilateral concern of the Papua New Guinea and Indonesian governments, it persisted in perpetrating the lie that the 'border-crossers' were not refugees. As Brunton concluded (1986: 37), this attitude confirmed Australia's historical attachment to an economy, culture and politics tied more to the northern hemisphere than to the region, a policy more committed to the protection of commercial interests than to the aspirations of the indigenous peoples to its north. A change of government in Papua New Guinea during 1985 allowed UNHCR to establish a Branch Office in 1986 and in the same year Papua New Guinea became a signatory of the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol (UNHCR Briefing Notc 1989: 1). By 1986 the Papua New Guinea government had developed a comprehensive policy to deal with the situation of nearly 12,000 persons camped inside its border; accepting that their presence was to be of indefinite duration, a policy of relocating the camps away from the border was implemented, although official government policy remained unchanged. During 1987-88, following intensive organisation by the Papua New Guinea government, nearly 3000 people were moved from the border camps to the new relocation site at East Awin in the Western Province (UNHCR Briefing Note 1989: 2).

Examining the situation of the West Papuan refugees is difficult against the background of public policy and reality of actions of the government; the fact that the refugees were relocated to a more permanent camp further away from the border while publicly denied any clarification of official status is an example of this policy. Blaskett (1986) has examined the discrepancy between official Papua New Guinea government policy and practice in respect to the handling of border problems. The history of neglect and procrastination by the Papua New Guinea government, combined occasionally with openly sympathetic statements and practical assistance has become a factor of the border involvement.

The Border Administration Agreement which is reviewed and revised every five years was initiated in an attempt to minimise problems resulting from the common border (Blaskett 1986: 4). Information exchange, revising policies and increasing the efficacy of border administration were stated aims of the Agreement, also that neither country would give refuge

to agents of subversion acting against the other country, and that border dwellers would be allowed movement across the border for traditional purposes (Blaskett 1986: 5).

Clearly, this has been ignored, as border crossers, including women and children have been shot and killed by Indonesian troops and soldiers have harassed innocent Papua New Guinea civilians as they hunted for (alleged) OPM 'rebels' in Papua New Guinea (Falvey in *The Age*, cited in AWPA April 1991: 9). Following an optimistic meeting in June 1990 between Papua New Guinea and Indonesian officials, during the months of June, July and August Indonesian forces repeatedly encroached upon Papua New Guinea territory during *'ferocious and frequent Indonesian-OPM military clashes'* (AWAP October 1990: 1). A man and a woman killed near the camp at Yapsie were West Papuans, but according to the UNHCR, they were not refugees (*Times of PNG*, 23 August 1990).

Despite the meetings and the resultant agreements, acts of aggression by Indonesia have continued and have been either ignored or played-down by Papua New Guinea and the earlier Australian administration. As late as 1986, Viviani stated that:

> *The failure of the existing border arrangements is again a question of effective communication and negotiation. The issues have been resolved at the level of principle: every Papua New Guinea government has affirmed that Irian Jaya is part of Indonesia and that the OPM should not use Papua New Guinea as a base for its activities. Every Papua New Guinea government has carried domestic political costs for that policy, without being able to effectively implement that policy. Since Papua New Guinea governments cannot, for domestic reasons, agree to joint patrols and hot pursuit, the burden is placed again on effective communication with the Indonesian authorities in Irian Jaya and on effective arrangements for border crossers. Without these Indonesian incursions will recur, Papua New Guinea will protest and a spiral of deteriorating relations will take place. This is not in Australia's interests* (Viviani, quoted by Blaskett 1986: 9).

Blaskett sees this statement as suggesting that it is Papua New Guinea which is to blame for its inability to effectively implement the security aspects of the border agreement, and she makes the point that it is by no means clear that the OPM would disappear if it never used Papua New Guinea soil, and effective communication and arrangements for crossers cannot be said to be the sole responsibility of Papua New Guinea (Blaskett 1986: 9). Viviani's statement seems to be another example of 'blame the victim' and falls into the trap of expectation of words spoken by high level officials assuming a reality - in fact, while such ideals have been

enshrined in various agreements, the fighting and the stagnant situation of the refugees have continued to be the reality.

The churches in Papua New Guinea were the first organisations to assist refugees, taking action when governments procrastinated. Most refugees belong to Christian religions, and the Catholic and Protestant Churches had taken the initiative in supporting the refugees in the border camps, both in the Sandaun (West Sepik) and Western Provinces. The Melanesian Council of Churches (MCC) established a Committee on Melanesian Refugees in 1978 to protect the rights of refugees and raise public awareness (May 1986: 146). After the 1984 influx the bishop of Vanimo, John Etheridge, and the bishop of Kiunga, Gerard Deschamps, took a strong stand against forced repatriation, supported by the Catholic Bishops' Conference and by other denominational and inter-denominational bodies in Papua New Guinea, including the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea, the Evangelical Church of Papua, and the MCC. Bishop Deschamps has maintained his stance regarding the claims of refugees that they were forced out of Irian Jaya by Indonesian military action and land take-over (Deschamps, pers.comm. 1989). All the mainstream churches in Papua New Guinea have contributed to the maintenance of the refugee camps; support has also come from Australian church groups (May 1986: 147; Pautalo interview 1989).

The Catholic Mission in Sandaun spent $30,000 per month on the refugees (Jones 1985: 13) when government assistance was not forthcoming. The Montfort mission at Kiunga provided for the border camps in the Western Province and established a mission station at the Iowara (Camp 10) Administration Centre at the East Awin relocation site when the first refugees moved there in 1988. Although the move was forced by Indonesian unease at the proximity of existing camps to the border, it was implemented with as little publicity as possible.

These political constraints, and several well publicised border incidents (May 1986: 117-119) confirmed the intent of the Papua New Guinea government that action concerning the refugees should proceed with a minimum of publicity. With a very few exceptions, outsiders wishing to visit the camps have not been permitted to do so, and the church organisations, ZOA (the Dutch International Aid Agency) and International Red Cross have provided assistance under the auspices of the UNHCR, Provincial Government and the ultimate discretion of the Papua New Guinea Department of Foreign Affairs. Australia has been the

principal donor to the UNHCR program assisting the refugees in the camps (Smith 1988: 10; UNHCR interview 1989), although this fact is not publicised by either officials or parliamentarians. In 1985, Prime Minister Somare, when asked if he agreed with his Acting Foreign Minister, Tony Bias, that Australia's $2 million assistance to the UNHCR to feed and provide for the refugees in border camps was 'mere token assistance', said he did not know that Australian money was involved; he thought all the money had come from the UN (Dorney 1990: 277). The money is in fact administered through the UN in accordance with UN practice. In 1988 the UNHCR's Papua New Guinea budget was $2,0057,250 ($US), supplemented by funds from NGO's such as ZOA, SCF/UK and Catholic Missions (UNHCR Briefing Note 1989).

Owing to the stated aims of as little publicity as possible being given to the refugees (interviews with officials of Papua New Guinea Department of Provincial Affairs and Foreign Affairs) and to border incidents generally, it has been difficult for non-officials to visit the refugee camps and without official permission, impossible. This restriction applied to all outside visitors, from Papua New Guinea, Australia, Europe or any other country. All journalists wishing to visit the border are required to apply for permission and must inform the Department of Foreign Affairs of their itinerary and names of perspective interviewees (Blaskett and Wong 1989: 52). In 1985 (before the change to the Wingti government) the Australian Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Hayden was denied permission by Papua New Guinea Foreign Secretary Matane to visit the border camps for fear that the visit might be *'misinterpreted by Indonesia'* (Dorney 1990: 277).

> *Papua New Guinea's wish to keep the refugees beyond the prying eyes of foreigners was compounded by the release of a report on the crisis by the Australian section of the International Commission of Jurists. Led by NSW parliamentarian John Dowd, the ICJ group spoke to refugees in all camps and concluded that Indonesian excesses were the prime reason for the exodus. As a result, PNG has become wary of official visitors from Australia and, said John Giheno recently, would "probably not" allow Bill Hayden to visit the camps when he comes to PNG soon. Later, Mr Hayden commented that first hand experience of the camps "could be worth while"* (Osborne 1985b:17).

The camps have never been 'closed' camps, unlike the refugee camps in Thailand and Hong Kong where refugees are guarded inside high security compounds and workers must also pass tight security checks. However, the extreme remoteness of the area is its own security. Refugees interviewed by me identified themselves as Yonggom (or Muyu), Mapi, Ningerum and Mandobo people from the southern regions; these rural refugees were often pragmatic in their attitude to making a new life in Papua New Guinea. Some claimed direct land resumption had forced them out, but because of the kinship ties, familiar physical situation and life style of the Western Province, they were resigned to accepting the restrictions of refugee camp life for the sake of a brighter future for their children.

Attitudes of politicised refugees were quite different, although all accepted the sacrifice of their personal lives for the cause of a free West Papua. These informants, some highly educated, openly sympathised with the OPM. Some were members of the fighting arm of the OPM, most had fled because of political acts (displaying pro-independence posters or attending political meetings) usually while attending Cenderawasih University in Jayapura. They had been resident in Jayapura but originally came from other areas such as Sorong, Serui, and Biak. The refugees from the highlands include the Me people, from the western Paniai Lakes, Enarotali region, and Dani from the Wamena district of the Baliem Valley.

The OPM militants, often high profile, had arrived at the camps after long periods spent in the bush fighting and were prepared to spend whatever time was necessary waiting for a change in Indonesia's internal affairs - disorder or revolt in other provinces that necessitated transfer of army units from Irian Jaya. These OPM members were easy to recognise from press reports and photographs, some had assumed leadership roles in the camp and were known to the UNHCR; some came forward spontaneously to hear news of the outside world.

Despite the persistence of the Papua New Guinea government in policy statements and officials in outside countries to designate West Papuans 'border crossers' they refer to themselves in every situation as refugees. Since 1987 the two terms have

ceased to exist and all West Papuans are now called refugees (UN Briefing Note 1989). The refugee community in Port Moresby, despite the political status of individuals or the length of residence in Papua New Guinea, likewise defined its members as refugees and retained a strong sense of community. Social status, whether retained from position, family or education level in Irian Jaya, or achieved by access to money or housing has not altered this sense of commonality. Their shared Melanesian identity was stressed again and again by West Papuans in the camps. As factions existed in the OPM, so factions exist among refugees. Some writers have stressed this point (Dorney 1990), but during my fieldwork I experienced cooperation from West Papuan refugees from different groups both in the camps and in the urban centres and all expressed common concerns and were willing to take me to meet people other than their own *wantoks*.

There are several individuals in urban centres, long-term residents and in some cases now Papua New Guinean citizens, who have achieved positions of influence in certain areas. While there are difficulties inherent in such situations most of these people retain a commitment to assisting the refugee cause where they can. One Papua New Guinean who I interviewed in Port Moresby (in connection with domestic violence issues) told me her father crossed the border into the West Sepik Province in the 1950s. He always remained an 'outsider', unable to conform to the traditional village patterns of kinship and marriage ties, and although the marriage was successful, the wife officially was regarded as the dominant partner. Links were retained with his kin, and this family connection influenced the daughter's attitude towards refugees in her official position. Papua New Guineans realistically see how easily a stroke of a coloniser's pen might have put them in the position of the refugees today.

The attitude toward refugees by the government of Papua New Guinea has not always been sympathetic; however, when the conditions in the border camps became untenable and were publicised, responsibility was realised and taken. The move to East Awin improved physical conditions, but the fact remains that the refugees were forced to flee their lands and are now living in isolation, stripped of all material assets

and under conditions of uncertain political status. This lack of resolution concerning their future remains the major problem for the refugees.

History of the border camps

The first West Papuan refugees arrived in the Australian mandated territory of New Guinea in 1962 and by 1978, more than two years after Papua New Guinea attained independence (in September 1975) the estimated number of refugees was approximately 7000 persons. Most of these people assimilated into the community and many are now Papua New Guinea citizens. Following intensified military action between Indonesian government troops and the OPM in 1983, another 11,000 persons had entered Papua New Guinea by the end of 1984. According to the UNHCR, although the organisation was keen to give any assistance required, the government denied it access to the refugees and the only help provided was by local churches. Government policy was influenced by fear that the granting of asylum to these people would be regarded by Indonesians as a hostile act - the establishment of 'rebel' camps along the common border.

Denying the refugees assistance did not make them return and in 1985 reports of malnutrition, disease and 100 deaths by starvation became a public scandal. The reaction of the ordinary population forced politicians and policy makers to consider the depth of pan-Melanesian sympathies and in late 1984 UNHCR was invited to assist on a limited scale. A change of government in 1985 allowed UNHCR to establish a Branch Office in 1986; in the same year Papua New Guinea became a signatory of the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol.

The border refugee camps

In 1984 the first of an eventual 10,000 to 12,000 refugees began arriving in Papua New Guinea. They stayed close to the border, sometimes near established villages. The refugee camps, all placed close to the border, were, from north to south, Blackwater, near Vanimo on the north coast, Amanab, Kamberatoro, Green River, Yapsie, Telefomin, Kugo, Bankim in Sandaun; in the Western Province, Atkamba, Tarakbits, Komokpin, Kungim, Iogi, Dome, Niogomban and Kuiu. In the Western

Province some 2500 refugees had arrived in the Kiunga area. Since then other refugees have established themselves in camps around villages at Skotiau and Wasengla (the scene of Indonesian army incursions in October 1988).

The 1984 exodus from the Jayapura area consisted of the educated elite - the university, school, civil service, police and Melanesian soldiers who fled in fear of their lives during the extensive clean-up campaign which followed the flag raising of 13 February, the shootings and OPM retaliations. These articulate and politically conscious refugees became the Blackwater inmates, and are labelled 'political' by officials.

With the exception of the Blackwater refugees, and the highland people who were forced to leave the inland valleys following destruction of their villages and gardens, many of the refugees had close traditional ties with the Papua New Guinean villagers. They belonged to the same clans or had marriage ties and so could expect hospitality. At places like Kamberatoro and Green River people were given land to produce their own food and settled down without too much community disruption, although food production could not sustain the refugees. Despite both governments attempting to put the blame for the exodus on the OPM, the refugees consistently attributed it to transmigration - the loss of their land, stolen by Indonesians, and the violence of the Indonesian military. These refugees also believed in the possibility of future independence and some wanted to return to fight for it (Smith and Hewison 1986: 208).

The war in Irian Jaya and the continued resistance of the West Papuan people over many years were not given wide publicity, especially in Papua New Guinea. The first serious uprisings in Irian Jaya against Indonesian oppression began immediately after they were occupied in the early sixties but as far as Papua New Guinea was concerned, officially, there was nothing going on over the border. People who travelled there were always shocked at the conditions under which the Papuans existed and the treatment they received at the hands of the ever present military. We were also restricted from travelling close to the border in the 1970s and official visits

to Irian Jaya required the most involved protocol. Although the governments of Indonesia and Papua New Guinea have always denied the strength of the resistance movement, both countries have nevertheless treated the border as a war-zone. The occupation troops have included over 10,000 men in one area supported by full aerial power and the military throughout the country act as a civil police force.

The mass exodus of 1984 could not be hidden from the outside world; Papua New Guinea's response earlier had been to offer some assistance to refugees but to charge them with illegal entry and repatriate them. The greatly increased numbers made this difficult and led to the strained relations with Indonesia discussed earlier. The actual physical task of feeding the refugees at Blackwater was entirely borne by Red Cross, UNHCR and Austcare, at Kamberatoro the Diocese of Vanimo took responsibility for them and at Green River and Kiunga the Catholic church assisted when conditions became desperate.

The Bishop of Vanimo, John Etheridge, who has taken an actively sympathetic role regarding refugees and their plight, warned the government that the situation at Green River was becoming desperate but it was not until fifty-four deaths were reported from Komopkin in the Western Province that the government commented on the conditions. Parliament was told that the OPM were to blame, sacrificing their own women and children for the sake of politics. A minor UN official in the Western Province attempted to convince me in 1989 that all the refugees had been forced across the border by the OPM. The experienced and knowledgable Bishop Deschamps at the same interview maintained his agreement with the refugees, based on an historical understanding of the situation and a deeper knowledge of the West Papuan people. In relation to the movement of rural people, it is more realistic to believe that OPM operations have periodically stimulated strong Indonesian police and military countermeasures that have intimidated the local people and forced them to flee (Babbage 1990: 136). After talking with the refugees it is obvious that they left after severely traumatic experiences. Expressions of fear always stemmed from the Indonesian army action, not from contact with the OPM.

It is unlikely that refugees would desert their own land to attempt survival in precarious camp conditions unless forced to do so. Life in the border camps was uncomfortable and eventually desperate. By the time ninety-seven people had died the contention that deliberate neglect at the highest levels of government amounted to policy was hard to refute (Smith and Hewison 1986). By 1986 the government of Papua New Guinea had developed a comprehensive policy to deal with the 1984-85 influx of nearly 11,000 persons. Accepting that their presence was to be of indefinite duration a policy of moving all the West Papuans to a single site away from the border was implemented.

***Government action on border-dwellers*:**

The assistance provided by UNHCR to refugees in the border camps consisted of basic food requirements, water, medicine and a few necessary household items. The geographical isolation of most of the camps and the rough terrain caused many logistical difficulties. Visiting officials, medical teams and supply teams had great difficulty travelling to the camps. Conditions were crowded and unhygienic, although where resources were available, refugees utilised them so that Blackwater camp near Vanimo in the Sandaun Province soon assumed the status of a village. The response of all the refugees was one of motivation and poor or dangerous conditions arose from overcrowding and pressure of local resources rather than lethargy.

The original Blackwater camp in the Sandaun Province received considerable publicity; refugees here were classified as 'political', and the camp's proximity to the regional centre of Vanimo allowed them to travel and keep contact with developments concerning their situation. The camp was well organised, houses were constructed out of available bush material, productive gardens established and a village atmosphere and proximity to the coast gave residents a sense of belonging. Residents did not want to move to the East Awin site, far-away and deep in the interior forest and they resisted until threats and police action made it impossible to stay.

There had been press reports of malpractice involving government officials (*The Times of PNG* 1-7 September 1988); women especially had been accused of running

prostitution rackets, or establishing defacto marriages; evidence of government interference in the human side of life which would occur in any settlement or village and was exacerbated by the position of the women; often without the male family members - either killed or still hiding in Irian Jaya - and without money or means of support. Yet according to refugees, a strong sense of community prevailed with women conducting a fellowship affiliated to the ecumenical congregation of the camp, prayer and discussion groups, and two choirs (Ireeuw and Ireeuw 1986: 2). At one stage rations were cut because women had used basic commodities to make scones and bread for sale to raise money. The market run by the Blackwater refugees at Warastone near Vanimo, with fresh vegetables and handicrafts made from bush materials, was so successful that many Papua New Guineans frequented it; according to refugees, women were especially active in this venture and 'a sense of self-support and self-help began to take root at that time' (Ireeuw and Ireeuw 1986: 2). Women's industry is proved by the fact that the distance from the Blackwater camp to Vanimo was about 25 kms and the long walk, loaded down with produce, started long before sunrise. When the refugees were forcibly removed to the Western Province the collapse of the market was notable. Some Blackwater residents who were transferred to the small Telefomin camp could not garden due to unavailability of land, but they looked after children for the other women originally from Apnisibil, and baked for the twice-weekly market (Ruhukail pers. comm. 1989.).

In a recent report of the International Symposium on Refugees at Oxford University in March 1991, the situation was discussed, in relation to refugees world-wide:

> *Survival in the camps depends on entitlement to donor food, medicine and other essentials. In fact, this almost defines the expatriate bureaucrat's formal charge. It may also circumscribe the same administrator's concept of a proper refugee: one who is entitled to these donor commodities, acquires only his allotment, and does not complicate the donor's need for accountability by trading or selling any of these essentials. I feel that the biggest single source of expatriates' resentment of refugees stems from their failure to comprehend that trading donor commodities for other vital goods which are not provided by the international relief effort is also critical to survival ... To get these essentials, the refugee must apportion his donor food supplies so that such trade is possible. Thus the refugee, I believe, views donor food as a resource which must be managed and intelligently*

maximised. The expatriate 'administrator' views this maximization as theft, or at least misuse and bad faith (Waldron 1987: 2).

Once established in the camps, and particularly later at East Awin, with access to forest products and garden harvests, the refugees still regarded the UN rations as a central sustaining factor in their lives; as a sure source of food, especially protein and carbohydrate, and certainly as a commodity which, if used economically, allowed further manufacture into saleable items. The arrival and distribution of the rations had become the centre of camp life when no other food was available, served an organisational point of existence in a restricted life and allowed people to plan day-to-day existence that was otherwise empty of events.

As a press story, the sale of scones and bread by refugees to outside citizens presented a picture of refugees who had an excess of food, to the point of supplying luxury goods to others. In fact, the industry and often desperate needs of the refugees had impelled them to work hard to seek what cash return they could on what was available to them. Such self-motivated action is one way the refugee community can hope to establish the beginnings of a 'normal' village existence.

Medical Status

Following the events of 1984 health services were introduced by the Papua New Guinea government for the refugees in the border camps. Medical teams from the Health Department, and from 1985 the Red Cross and Save the Children Fund commenced treatment, targeting tuberculosis (TB), upper respiratory tract infection (URTI), common and exotic parasitic infections and malaria. Malaria levels were surveyed and preventative measures implemented and immunisation programs commenced against DPT and Polio.

A follow-up visit was undertaken in September 1985 to the Western Province camps to check the progress of health initiatives recommended by a nutritionist following the first reports of malnutrition. The nutritional status of the people had not improved. The medical officer described the distribution of food and the

supplementary feeding program as *'very erratic'* (Gau 1985,: 2). The recommendations had been ignored due to disorganisation and logistical difficulties including the breakdown of the supply boat and the radio telephone. Aid post orderlies (APOs) were criticised by government medical staff (Gau 1985: 4) for a general lack of concern and commitment which may have been a reflection of normal community priorities; targets for Supplementary Feeding are usually babies and young children, pregnant women and lactating mothers, all very far down on the scale of importance and, in many areas, traditionally banned from eating the high protein foods they require most at such times. The rationale of Supplementary Feeding was not understood despite many explanations and demonstrations and food was usually taken home, probably to be eaten by adult males. When APOs within the refugee population were identified, some were found to be *'very competent'* (Gau 1985, 4). The prohibition on sale of infant feeding bottles in Papua New Guinea was obviously not known by West Papuans and these articles had not been provided for by officials. As bottles had been readily available in Irian Jaya 'this posed a real problem for mothers with babies' (Ireeuw and Ireeuw 1986: 3). Together with lack of education facilities, stresses such as these added to the overall trauma of exile.

By the end of 1987, nearly 10,000 West Papuans were residing in 15 camps in Papua New Guinea. Over 7,000 were receiving UNHCR assistance and the remainder were still in border camps officially closed after voluntary repatriation or transfer to the new site at East Awin. During 1987-88 nearly 3000 persons were moved from the Western Province border camps. In 1987, 1,325 persons voluntarily repatriated, and by mid 1988, a further 244 repatriated under the auspices of the UNHCR. Plans for numbers relocated were not fulfilled in 1987 but UNHCR officials realised that more people moved would compound the difficulties involved in the construction of the new settlement. Papua New Guinea government officials were committed to the plan devised to move all refugees from the old border camps and, although at the end of 1989 the situation seemed to be at a stalemate, official statements stressed that all refugees would be relocated 'by force if necessary' (interview with Provincial Affairs officer).

The government drafted an amendment to the Migration Act which was to be tabled at the parliamentary Session in February 1989. Realistically it is widely agreed that reaction to such violent removal would be counterproductive, attracting outside media attention and revitalising pan-Melanesian sympathies. Although the strength of the OPM is a matter of contention, there are fears that such action would mobilise activists, either to prevent refugees leaving or launching new attacks within Irian Jaya.

The stay-put attitude of the occupants of the old border camps is a problem, and is acknowledged as such by all officials concerned. Official UNHCR opinion considers that there is pressure from the OPM on refugees to remain at the border. There is some sympathy towards their desire to stay; within the Western Province camps the West Papuans are close to their home region, some of the sites have attained a permanent village atmosphere with bush material houses and established gardens and there is strong motivation within the communities to ensure their own survival. Officially, most of the border camps are closed, and no longer receive assistance from the UNHCR, but some services established by aid workers are maintained. The capital city of Irian Jaya. Jayapura, is sited close to the border on the northern coast; resolving the situation of the refugees may have been accelerated if Papua New Guinea's capital was likewise positioned. In this sense, the remoteness and isolation of the Western Province has dampened much of the impact of the refugee influx, or allowed the Papua New Guinea government to stifle news of it.

Early in 1986 the first meeting to decide a plan of action for the relocation of 'border crossers' was convened. The Department of Provincial Affairs and the UNHCR were responsible for the planning and implementation of the removal and relocating of the 10,000 persons. At this time priorities were to identify a suitable camp location, staff the camp area with Papua New Guinea government officers, organise the movement of the people, identify needs of camp occupants, implement the infrastructure and budget requirements for the entire project. It was suggested that the site at Wabo, previously used to hold 'political refugees', might be suitable and it was inspected, although it was feared that refuges sent there would be targeted by the Indonesian government as political prisoners and this plan was not accepted.

Discussions with refugees at East Awin and in Port Moresby reinforce Osborne's description of Wabo as a high security gaol in water-logged forest seclusion, however long-term refugees interviewed who had been sent to Wabo regarded internment there as part of their long journey to escape Indonesian terrorism.

At this stage funding for a resettlement camp was uncertain; the events of 1985 described above had pushed the government into action. UNHCR does not have a reserve of funds to instantly supply a need but requests funds from donor nations after a specific need is identified. Conversely, UNHCR may be aware of, and sympathetic to a need, but cannot go in and assist until the country concerned invites its presence (UNHCR Briefing Note: 1989).

In the previous Chapter Five, ***Border Development,*** earlier work by Jackson (1979, 1982) and others show that this province is remote, sparsely populated, difficult to traverse and underdeveloped. This is where the East Awin camp is located, and where events that started with the flight of refugees since the earliest Indonesian invasion have stopped, or at least stalled. Whether or not Jackson's contention that mining as 'false development' (Jackson 1982) is accepted, large scale mining at Ok Tedi is the only manifestation of change in the Western Province; Hyndman (1988: 291) has shown that this change has resulted in serious social disruption and has aversely affected the local landowners. The Ok Tedi development is sited on Mount Fubilan, 30 kilometres north west of East Awin, and the fate of the local mountain landowners is a lesson that little can be offered to refugees in this isolated forest environment. It is necessary to fly further north from East Awin before the mountains are visible, and from high it is possible to see how the country sweeps down to flatten into the huge lowland plains of the Western Province. The site for the relocation camp at East Awin is a clearing in dense lowland forest in the Ela Vala Basin between the Fly and Strickland Rivers. From the air the clearing is a bright red circle of mud in the newly cleared forest and it is in this camp that most of the refugees in Papua New Guinea remain, awaiting news of their status, and their future.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE CAMP AT EAST AWIN

Transmigration, and the continuing resistance against the Indonesia government in Irian Jaya, remain the chief causes of the refugee influx into Papua New Guinea and the reason why most refugees refuse to return willingly to their former homeland (interviews at East Awin and Port Moresby with Kambu, Kareth, Hembring, Mofu and other West Papuans). West Papuans from many regions of Irian Jaya, interviewed at the East Awin camp, blamed the Indonesian military for their plight, but agreed that OPM militants did use the old camps, or wanted their families to stay on the border to keep contact with them. In 1991, the vast majority of refugees still resided in the officially closed border camps - probably more than 5000 people, although it has not been possible to conduct an authoritative census. According to the most recent figures from the East Awin camp administrator, there are around 3000 refugees at East Awin, about the same number as in 1989 (Clausen 1991: 6).

One Yonggom refugee from Mindiptanah (near Merauke), typical of several interviewed, able to converse in English and Dutch, was non-political in his attitudes and determined only to make a new life in his new situation. He was employed in a low-ranking government position in the Mindiptanah district and was forced to flee after threats by Indonesian soldiers who had bashed and imprisoned his colleagues. He did agree that the OPM (with whose military wing he had no connection) wanted refugees to remain in the border camps until 'Independence'. Privately, he did not maintain the belief that this would happen and moved to the East Awin site to *'get on with the new life in an independent country among people of the same skin, hair and language.'* He claimed the towns in Irian Jaya were *'all Indonesianised - West Papuans are now outsiders and it is a country for the straight hairs only.'*

Another Yonggom couple from this area had decided to stay in Papua New Guinea, despite the poor quality of life at East Awin, for the sake of their four children. They were also sure that their children would benefit growing up in the

same culture in an independent Melanesian country because *'at home we have nothing - no future at all. It's all Asian there now. We did not want to leave our own country but we were pushed off our land and we were frightened of the Indonesian soldiers. We have nothing here either except to live among the same people - the future will be for our daughters.'* The attitudes of these West Papuans and many others interviewed who stated that they were not connected with the fighting arm of the resistance movement were sometimes more pragmatic about the future of West Papua but concurred with the statements of political, or fighting members of the OPM on events that had caused them to flee.

Refugees had different hopes regarding staying in Papua New Guinea or returning - *'one day'* - to a free West Papua. There had been no choice for a future life except sanctuary in Papua New Guinea but some refugees regarded camp life as a step towards a safe existence in Papua New Guinea, others regarded it as a recuperation before continuing the fight to reclaim their own country. Many of the people who had originated close to the Papua New Guinea border areas were reconciled to the new country; in pre-colonial times this had been their own territory. Many of the Blackwater people, and the highlanders, were determined to return, seeing no long-term future in the isolated lowland forest swamps. However, I spoke to some ex-Blackwater residents in Port Moresby who had also made the decision to stay in Papua New Guinea, or been forced to live outside of Indonesia because of their family connections or crimes they had witnessed (interviews with Mofu, Kambu).

Although the Papua New Guinea Department of Foreign Affairs has prohibited unofficial visitors to the camps at East Awin, once there, freedom of movement was possible, for visitors and inmates alike. Some political refugees have travelled to Port Moresby to talk to government and UN officials, despite the obvious difficulties of distance and expense of air travel. These are the refugees who are determined to return to their own country *(but not under present conditions)* rather than make a new life in Papua New Guinea, but are forced by circumstances to seek safety in the camps.

The relocation site at East Awin consists of a series of camps spread out along a 45 km section of the old Nomad road. The road runs from the landing, the Rimsite, on the Fly River at Dirindamasuk and the first settlement is about 47 kms from the river. Refugees were moved from the border and made their new camps in village style settlements usually beside creeks, naming each new site after their original border camp. These were named after districts or towns of original origin.

The camps, from west to east, are Blackwater, Niogomban, Atkamba, Iowara (Camp 10 Headquarters), Dome, Iogi, Telefomin, and Wamena. After Dome, the road divides with Mambramo (Memberambro), Tarakbits, Kungim, Komokpin and Kuiu on the northerly road towards Nomad. Iowara is a cleared, muddy area (Fig. 9) that houses the UN headquarters, Montfort Mission (East Awin branch), hospital, mechanics workshop, small saw-mill and carpentry workshop, housing for officials, playing field, and market place. It is the centre of a widely dispersed settlement which has not ceased to spread further; in December 1989 more refugees arrived from the Blackwater/Vanimo camp in West Sepik Province. They were settled further east beyond Kuiu, deep in the forest, and more than 70 kms from the Fly River landing. Like the earlier 1000 Blackwater settlers who were airlifted from the original Blackwater camp in the Sandaun Province in the presence of police reinforcements in May 1988 (Smith 1988: 12), the relocation site, remote in the forest and far from the coast, held few attractions for most of these urban dwellers.

Predominant numerically are the Yonggom (or Muyu) and Ningerum people who come from the Merauke district over the border, adjacent to the Western Province. The border cuts through their traditional land (Map 2) and consequently they share language and culture with Western Province people (Smith and Hewison 1986: 206; Hyndman 1987).

The East Awin site was settled without prior planning, and houses were constructed in village-style settlements close to water sources. The East Awin camp is not a fenced camp, rather it is isolated by natural barriers (Figs. 13 and 14). Separate groupings and familiar life styles have been maintained where possible. The Wamena

refugees who escaped from the central highlands of Irian Jaya built their village complex in the style of their original village (Fig. 14) with distinct features such as a men's house, wooden fences and gardens. Village houses, community buildings and the church were well constructed and maintained. The people retained their traditional village structure with men's house activities separated from family life: they displayed a pride in their new village and gardens but spoke of a continuing commitment to the freedom of their former homeland and were eager to show me maps and West Papuan flags displayed in the men's house.

Despite the settled appearance and productivity of their new village, like all the refugees interviewed they were worried about sustained productivity of their gardens. An impression is that the highlanders settled in a favourable area, their experience as gardeners assisting in the choice, but the area is poor compared with the rich agricultural valleys of their former home. All refugees from all areas expressed concern with the poor soil of the camp location.

Although the villages were settled along the road with distances of several kilometres between some of them, the entire East Awin camp is large by Papua New Guinea settlement standards. Settlements of comparable population size (in the Gulf, Sepik and Central Provinces) are coastal, or depend on vast waterways. Resources are not limitless, and as more refugees move from the border, subsistence farming will become more difficult and wildlife less abundant. Gardens will be forced out further into the forest and inevitably conflicts will arise with neighbouring peoples, as they arose when resources were stressed in the border camps where village people had granted them sanctuary.

Conflicts occurred in 1991 when several refugees were attacked and badly wounded by local landowners while hunting, probably outside the camp area (Kambu pers.comm. 1991). Although the people of the Western Province, north of the Lake Murray area, were hunters who moved seasonally and harvested sago groves, the Yonggom also used the seasonal floodlands for banana and sugarcane cultivation, and the inland slopes for taro (Jackson 1979: 7); when I talked with Pa and Awin villagers

they were insistent in informing me that they had established villages at East Awin *'long before the refugee camp came here.'* In the most remote villages people speak good English; due to lack of development in the Western Province, men travelled to the Central Province plantations to provide labour from early colonial times.

Sustained agriculture for subsistence needs, and the sale of excess produce for a cash income is a future aim, dependent on an all-weather road. At the time of my visit the road was under construction, progress inhibited by torrential rain, and it was necessary to walk between camps. It was sometimes possible to travel part of the distance by tractor. The Papua New Guinea government was responsible for funding the construction of the road, a major cost in the setting up of the new site. A successful agreement with an oil exploration company was negotiated and during 1989 Curtain Brothers, a private company from Australia was proceeding on the road construction as quickly as a late wet season permitted.

When I left East Awin to return to Kiunga the section of the road close to the Fly River was open, and a section that had required several hours of low-gear four wheel drive negotiation was covered in less than an hour (Figs. 3 and 4). However, the condition of the road, with its extremely slippery surface of graded mud after light rain, the steep sides, blind curves and crests had resulted in a potentially dangerous thoroughfare. This road is the life-line from the inaccessible camps to the Fly River and hence to Kiunga. In 1991 the road was blocked at least twice, according to my information, by Awin people, and the local landowners, because compensation for the use of the land had not been paid (Kambu pers. comm. 1991). These acts successfully cut the only access to the outside world, but also caused great stress to the refugees who respect the rights of the landowners and feel the camps are not secure. The fact that the money has not been paid supports the contention that the Papua New Guinea government now expects most refugees to eventually return to Irian Jaya.

The long-term condition of the road and reliable access to it, is the factor inhibiting implementing projects that will depend on external marketing facilities. East Awin has been selected as a site due to its isolated position and the low density of

population in the area, but these factors create other problems. It is not an area suitable for agriculture (other than the first crops from the newly cleared rainforest). The people of the lowland forest were seasonal hunters and gatherers, and horticulturists, depending on sago for basic needs. The long-term viability of the camps depends on whether the refugees can be sustained before total devastation forces the Papua New Guinea government to re-think their position.

If the refugees remain at the East Awin camp, finding outlets for cash generating schemes will be difficult, although the problem of marketing goods is not unique to East Awin. Access to market outlets has been a constraint to the success of many projects in rural areas of Papua New Guinea. There was no airstrip at the camp in late 1989, although helicopters could land on the cleared playing-field in suitable weather. An airstrip has been included in future plans (when the camp population reaches 10,000) but the use of air transport is not economically viable for small-scale marketing. In effect, the refugees are marooned in the forest with little real prospect of life sustaining support, either farming or cash generating.

Medical status of refugees at East Awin

I discussed a wide range of health issues with Dr. Mastic-Bukenya in Port Moresby in September 1989: she had completed her work as Medical Co-ordinator in the refugee camps, reporting that by September 1988, satisfactory standards had been achieved at East Awin and the remaining border camps. The disease pattern at East Awin was assessed as being similar to that of the local population (Mastic-Bukenya 1988: 3). Common diseases included malaria, skin diseases, respiratory infections and helminthic infestations; immunisation programs commenced in the border camps were continued, and remaining TB cases treated. Refugees crossing over the border had been dosed with *Yomesan* to treat any possible carriers of *Taenia solium*, the tapeworm stage of cysticercosis (*Save The Children Fund* 1987 Report), and 24 hours before leaving border camps to move to East Awin all refugees had received a single dose of praziquantel. Praziquantel, a broad-spectrum antitrematode drug originally developed to treat schistosomiasis, had been used in the treatment of cysticercosis with promising results (Nash and Neva 1984: 1495). Generally, nutritional standards had improved

with checks continuing on weight of young children and babies. Refugee helpers continued to work with medical staff at Iowara and those medically qualified were being considered for registration with the Medical Board (Mastic-Bukenya 1988: 2).

The establishment of a hospital and clinic at the Iowara Camp 10 headquarters at East Awin (Fig. 7) with the services of expatriate ZOA and Papua New Guinean staff, some of whom had been involved in the health care of refugees before the move from the border camps, consolidated aims for health care. These people were dedicated and whenever possible attempted to explain to their patients the techniques of modern medical aid, preventative medicine and sanitation. Aid Post Orderlies (APOs) were available in the outlying camps and medical staff carried out patrols on foot when necessary.

Relocating to a new site in a previously uninhabited area offered the opportunity for improved community hygiene measures. However, the pressure of population (3000 persons) requires constant monitoring and attention to environmental degradation. Septic tanks have been installed for some of the houses built for officials; an observation was that in some areas the ground was not suitable for septic tank waste absorption, and the necessity for large numbers of latrines could be problematic in the future. The construction of pit latrines has been encouraged and checks carried out to ensure each dwelling has access to one.

Monitoring of all water sources during 1988 found them to be safe (Mastic-Bukenya 1988: 5); with the high population situated in camps close to streams, testing will continue to be an important component of health standard maintenance. Despite the heavy rainfall, short dry spells cause a rapid drying of water courses and there was no provision for long-term storage facilities. The completion of the road would allow water to be transported by road tanker.

Workers in the camps have targeted a need for education in basic health and hygiene. Requirements for such instruction vary; some village people adhere to traditional practices which are extremely dangerous and cause unnecessary problems,

specifically in childbirth, yet conversely, the concept of any intrusive biomedical process is quite foreign, and in consequence, threatening. The dangers involved in childbirth remain one of the major women's health concerns in Papua New Guinea, with a much higher risk level in rural areas. Pregnancy and childbirth risks are complicated by malaria and statistics relating to morbidity in Papua New Guinea have been masked by the incidence of malaria. Both common and falciparum malaria are especially dangerous to pregnant women and the Western Province has high levels of both. The more severe falciparum does not always respond to *Chloroquine*, the common preventative treatment used by most expatriates.

Any educational programs directed toward health, pregnancy and childbirth would be worthwhile, and medical staff who work most closely with refugees consider that at the present time there is a great need for such instruction. At present the medical workers give such instruction as their time permits to those women who present at clinics, but many women prefer not to utilise modern medical treatments, or arrive late in crisis situations. Children and babies may not be brought in until seriously ill, often too far advanced for successful treatment. In the unfamiliar situation, and often following traumatic disruption to their lives, there is reliance on traditional medical practitioners and 'magic' rituals. Two of the villages in the camp settlement specialised in such ritual practice and rural people especially sought help there before resorting to modern medicine, or used it as a back-up. The camp was fortunate that the foreign medical workers were sensitive to the needs and concerns of the rural refugees and geared treatments and methodology accordingly.

The needs of the refugees at East Awin cannot be assessed as applying to an homogenous group. The camps were settled as separate villages, based on language, cultural and ethnic groupings. The requirements expressed by the Blackwater residents were those of educated urban dwellers; educational opportunities, access to the outside world, restoration of human rights and eventual return to interrupted professions. Access to medical and educational facilities was seen as a restoration of a right rather than a novelty. While basic hygiene and health instruction is not needed by this group, the change from urban to village living has meant altered standards and

difficulties coping with rural isolation. The impact of this group of people on the land however will be the same as that of village people.

Despite the great variation in previous life experiences and the maintenance of discrete settlements within the camp area, all the residents of East Awin entered Papua New Guinea as refugees and identify as such. If, within Irian Jaya, the OPM can be considered a nationalistic movement of the people, the bond uniting the refugees is their quest for self-determination in their homeland. If some of them have decided to seek freedom by establishing themselves in Papua New Guinea, it is because they are *'among people of the same skin, hair and language'* - their own people.

One of the most informed, articulate West Papuans made himself known to me while visiting his wife in the hospital; originally from Sorong, he had not completed his law degree when he was forced to flee Jayapura and eventually made his way, via Vanimo, to East Awin. His crime was preparing posters for a demonstration. With another young ex-theology student, from Serui Island, he was running one of the camp schools. His co-teacher had held one of the posters in the demonstration and also forced to escape from brutal retribution, still seemed unbelieving that such a small incident could have changed the course of his life. When I later visited this school (unannounced after a 3 hour walk) I was impressed both by the professionalism of the teachers and the behaviour of the students, and the enthusiasm of both. Although they begged me to send a book on teaching English (or any second-hand school book), they did not ask for any personal item and were committed to keeping the school going despite lack of equipment and the previous school building disintegrating around them.

There was an ambivalent atmosphere in the camp; a strong feeling that this was a resting place from the trials of persecution and months (and years) of living in the bush and fighting and fleeing from the Indonesian army. No-one I spoke to ever gave the impression that camp life could be anything other than transient, yet many of the refugees had embarked on their day-to-day camp tasks with great enthusiasm and professionalism. The important factors of refugee ability and enthusiasm should not be

overlooked in the setting up of programs; wherever possible, skilled or experienced refugees should be appointed to supervise schemes, at least to maintain them after initial implementation by outside workers. Refugees in Papua New Guinea have already suffered massive disruption to their lives. While government targets may have been achieved in their basic physical welfare, it would be beneficial to all concerned to equip them for life in a changing society.

Although the usual UN policy of restraining benefits for refugees to the level of those available to the local national population is in force, the particularly depressed state of the Western Province means that in some cases camp conditions may appear superior to those of local Papua New Guinea people. Yet opportunities for constructive occupation of their time must be provided for refugees if life is to be tenable within the camps. All the refugees I spoke with placed a high priority on education for their children, and for themselves if they were young and their education had been disrupted. Some OPM fighters claimed they came 'out of the bush so that our children could have access to schooling', and others claimed the promise of proper schools, and improved health facilities decided the move from the border camps to the relocation site.

The relocation of a large body of refugees away from the border has resulted in some respite for refugees. There will be a need for proper monitoring of various programs as they become established. Experience in other refugee camps has demonstrated that there is sometimes a high degree of competition between agencies to become involved in supplying project support to refugees. Once established, when several agencies are supporting the same program, maintenance of consensus and direction becomes difficult (Preston 1988: 3).

The report on educational needs for the East Awin location site (Preston 1988) recommended strategies for an equitable and effective education system within the resettlement camp. The Preston report recommended that any external resources should be administered locally by UNHCR and the Montfort Mission and permitted schools registered with the National Department of Education. Permitted schools are

those approved by the Papua New Guinea Department of Education, and teachers must be registered by the National Department of Education. The curriculum must be approved and children are eligible to sit national examinations at Grade 6, although usually the schools receive no financial support or resources from government funds (Preston 1988: 81). The Montfort Mission has been allocated responsibility for the education system. The mission extends its care to all refugees regardless of their religious affiliation, and has expertise in the Papua New Guinea education system through the secondment of an Australian Christian Brother, a senior education specialist with many years experience in Papua New Guinea.

Since the publication of Preston's report, substantial funding for schools has been received from the European Economic Community (EEC). Five schools were to be built, four fully funded by OECD and one funded by the Montfort Mission. These would replace the bush material schools (see Figs. 11 and 12) already in need of repairs or replacement by mid 1989 (due to lack of sago palms in the area, plastic sheeting was used for roofing and had rapidly disintegrated). UN policy regarding education in refugee camps precludes the provision of secondary schooling but the possibility that a high school may be provided has been discussed (Preston 1988: 65). Age restrictions on students utilising primary level schools have been relaxed as many children missed several years of education during their flight from Irian Jaya and while resident in border camps.

Services such as health, education and marketing infrastructure provided for refugees will be available to national residents from the surrounding area. National primary school children may be inhibited from integrating into the system until English becomes the language of instruction, however, the attitudes of both refugee teachers and students is such that local children could benefit despite some language difficulties. Local village children whose families move into the area on a seasonal basis would benefit from such schooling, however most Papua New Guinean camp staff prefer to leave their families in their home towns for continuity of education.

The difficult terrain, distance from the large urban centres and isolation of Western Province villages, and especially the established hunting/gathering and horticultural mode of subsistence which meant seasonal change of habitation, has resulted in a relatively unchanged way of life for many inhabitants of this province. Conversely, due to the recruitment of Western Province men in early plantation labour schemes in other provinces, there is a high level of English spoken. While *tokpisin* is spoken in the province, both by workers at the Ok Tedi mine, government employees in Kiunga and at the East Awin camp site, the isolated situation of the refugees has prevented its widespread use.

There was more interest shown in English classes in the camps than in classes in Port Moresby where there are more opportunities for urban refugee women to move about and mix with other language groups. A few women in the camps used tentative *tokpisin* when attempting conversation. In view of the position of Papua New Guinea in the world today, the fact that English is the language of government, business and the media, it would be advantageous for the refugees to attain proficiency in English. Despite the nationalistic attitudes towards the *lingua franca* it was noticeable returning to Papua New Guinea after ten years that English is spoken more often and among groups that previously spoke only *tokpisin*.

In the New Guinea region women have traditionally been responsible for feeding their families, growing the food as well as processing it. In the border camps where land was not readily available, women complained that they felt useless, deprived of their agricultural work or the opportunity to earn money. Those that had the opportunity to make gardens did so and entered the general market trade where there was access to it, or created outlets like the successful market at Blackwater in Sandaun Province.

At the East Awin relocation site, gardens were quickly cleared and women recommenced subsistence farming. Their surplus harvest supplied a good market which was held twice weekly at Iowara (Fig. 8) and they also participated in the Kiunga market. People walked for hours in the pre-dawn dark to bring goods to the

Iowara market. Lack of cash inhibited sales but the market was a thriving centre, with refugees of rural and urban origin participating.

Garden produce included root vegetables, spring onions, beans, cucumbers, capsicum and pawpaw and several varieties of green leaf vegetables; edible green leaves and ferns were also gathered from the forest; chickens and eggs, cassowary and wild pig meat, fish and shrimp were often available. Women from the Blackwater camp baked bread, scones and donuts for sale, and items such as writing pads, pencils, kitchen utensils or sugar and salt brought in from Kiunga were repackaged for resale. Women displayed new clothes they had sewn, although lack of money resulted in few sales. Most people wore the clothes received from overseas donors, often quite unsuitable for the hot wet tropics. The market was similar in its organisation to other markets in Papua New Guinea, with no bargaining, high prices for rare produce and an opportunity for people to socialise and barter produce.

The fact that this productivity will decrease with increasing population stress (unless clearing continues unabated) is probably the most serious issue threatening the future of the East Awin camp. There were plans to initiate large-scale oil-palm production at East Awin, but as Jackson (1979) has shown, such schemes initiated in earlier years have not been altogether economically successful. Labor for oil-palm plantations was part of the government rationale for citing the camp at East Awin.

Cox (1979) has examined similar schemes in the East Sepik Province, with particular attention to the effect of cash cropping on women, or family life generally. Cox has shown that on the rubber blocks men were always the official owners and recipients of payments although in many cases they had become absentee landlords and women worked the blocks, to the detriment of subsistence farming and family life. At the moment income from future rubber production could only be considered as a small cash injection, which in a self-sufficient community would be useful. Cox (1979: 30) demonstrates that total dependency on such crops, where village life is disrupted and economic gain marginal, is detrimental to the community, especially to women and children. Cox's work should be seriously considered in strategies to avoid

problems in relation to the health and welfare of women on agricultural settlement schemes.

The East Awin site is not suitable for long-term agricultural production in its natural state. The poor quality of the soil has prevented permanent settlement by traditional owners and assistance is required to enable sustained production. Jackson (1979) referred to the difficulty of bringing the region into the national economy because of its limited agricultural potential and isolation; the situation has not greatly changed in a decade and means a difficult future for the refugees.

Water supply will have to be regulated and storage systems constructed as the creeks are dependent on rainfall. The high rainfall, and the fact that heavy rain can fall non-stop for several days gives an impression of a too-plentiful supply of water. However, in such a situation the alluvial soil drains quickly and a short dry spell can cause sudden and severe problems. Most refugees interviewed expressed concern at the lack of a stored water supply, and in 1990 a drought did occur (Couch, pers. comm. 1990).

Among the refugee male population interviewed, regardless of educational status, attitudes toward women's issues did not differ greatly from those of Papua New Guinean males. Males usually see their own interests as dominant, tending to brush aside matters of concern to women, although not denying their responsibility to women in their care. Also, comradeship existed between some couples who had lived off the land or travelled with the OPM fighting units.

Males are usually more confident and articulate, and in the case of both urban and rural refugees, competent in foreign languages, in this case English and *tokpisin*. It is easier for officials to negotiate with men. Despite this, women from all backgrounds showed strong interest in learning English and understand that attaining proficiency will facilitate their opportunities for success in the new situation. The few formally educated women in the camps were not usually involved in any official positions.

Accomplishments like proficiency in another language were only discovered incidentally.

Among the employed in Papua New Guinea society, social patterns of male solidarity and reciprocity have resulted in the redistribution of income in activities such as beer drinking, gambling and cash sharing ventures. Large amounts of cash are spent in this way, often to the detriment of the health and well-being of other family members, and women generally. Unemployed men in rural villages can also participate in gambling, reciprocal activities and drinking due to urban remittances (Zimmer 1983: 22-23).

Residents of some of the border camps had become involved in drinking and gambling, in particular at Blackwater (Sandaun), which was close to Vanimo. These activities were usually ascribed to boredom and lack of purpose yet the consumption of alcohol and its destructive ramifications afflicts all strata of Papua New Guinea society, including the educated and elite. It was suggested to me by UN officials that I look into this aspect of camp life; however at that time the problems did not threaten family life at East Awin, and men interviewed asserted heavy or ritual consumption of alcohol is not the norm in their culture. Camp leaders, even well-known OPM leaders, were closely associated with church life, in one case a high-profile leader was a pastor. However, the presence of Papua New Guinea workers on the road gangs and oil exploration sites means the probability of future social interaction. When projects are introduced there are advantages in assisting women to enter into them and take control of their own finances at an early stage.

The problem of implementing income-generating schemes in rural areas is a nation-wide one with particular difficulties relating to the isolation of the Western Province. The Ok Tedi mine is a major source of revenue for the government, yet even a large development like this involves the local land-owners in a peripheral way (Hyndman 1991b: 362). Mining and oil exploration ventures close to the East Awin relocation site may absorb numbers of refugees in the future (at present local Papua

New Guinean citizens are employed), injecting cash into the community and opening up small-business opportunities.

East Awin is unique among refugee camps in many parts of the world in that it is not a closed camp, is not sited in a cramped urban site in a drought and famine stricken locality, and the great majority of the refugees have left a similar home environment. Despite these advantages, it is an ecologically fragile area. Traditional hunting and horticulture, ecologically sustainable in forest areas with small mobile populations are not possible where 3000 people are relocated within a few months to an ultimately restricted area. Small gardens within untouched forest are reusable after a short fallow when regrowth occurs naturally. Population pressure at East Awin will result in larger garden areas and the urgent need for skilled agricultural assistance. There may be a need for novel, non-traditional adjuncts to the known patterns of agriculture and an enlightened and persistent approach to their implementation. It is also necessary that any methods used be low cost and not reliant on imported materials such as sophisticated machinery, inorganic fertilisers or pesticides.

Australian aid directed through the United Nations has financed the initial stages of the East Awin relocation site but to date has not included specific practical project assistance. With the benefit of awareness of past land-use schemes, the relocation site offers an opportunity to avoid heavy environmental degradation by avoiding large-scale clearing for cash crops and especially clear-fell logging. A small saw-mill was organised economically by a local company whose expertise increased benefits for the refugees. Houses were constructed out of the local timber to a satisfactory standard, however the plastic sheet material used for roofing in the absence of sago palm had disintegrated within a year. Refugees all expressed great dissatisfaction with the lack of sago palm and the inadequacies of the plastic sheeting.

As previously noted, income-generating projects, even the most simple, or technologically undemanding, are not readily adaptable to the isolated East Awin site. Small items such as bilums (traditional woven string-bags) have been sent to outlets in Port Moresby (Girl Guide and YWCA shops) where they compete with craftwork from

all areas. With the current economic situation in Papua New Guinea, and the small tourist trade, sale of crafts will not generate a steady cash income. Sewing classes implemented by the Sisters of the Montfort Mission are now operated by refugee women; the women involved at all levels, organising, sewing or learning, were enthusiastic about the sewing classes, but like everything else, materials were in short supply The expectations of the refugees are not unrealistic but informed assistance at an early stage may prevent disappointment with poor crop production and disillusionment with life at East Awin.

Refugees in Port Moresby

On a world basis, it has been noted that attempting to compile figures on refugees, both in and outside of camps, is not a useful exercise (Leopold 1991: 5); the exact number of West Papuan refugees resident in Papua New Guinea is not known. Austcare (Anon, Austcare 1988: 4) using figures compiled from all available sources to that year, gave a figure of 20,000. This includes all people who crossed into Papua New Guinea from the early 1960s. By 1979, various estimates indicated the presence of between 2,000 and 10,000 refugees; some had been granted permissive residence, others had informally joined relatives, married citizens, and set up house in Papua New Guinea (Austcare 1988: 4).

The generally agreed number of around 10,000/12,000 arrived during the influx of 1984, these refugees constitute those remaining in border camps and at the East Awin relocation site. Small numbers of refugees have been repatriated, some under duress, others under the auspices of the UNHCR. In May 1987, the UNHCR Representative in Port Moresby, A. Akiwumi, gave a figure of 1,769 refugees returned since 1985; he did not have figures prior to that date. Aditjondro claimed in June 1987 that between 5000 and 5500 had returned, basing his figures on a December 1986 report by the Governor of Irian Jaya, Izaac Hindom, to the Indonesian Minister of the Interior. These figures do not clarify the issue but are given as extremes. In fact, it is difficult to estimate the numbers from any sources.

It is accepted that massive inaccuracies exist in all attempts to count refugees, and the social consequences of the 'counting' process and the proportion of agency effort it takes are damaging to refugees (Leopold 1991: 5), yet donor agencies insist on numbers. In Papua New Guinea, the fluidity of movement among some refugees and the physically unrestricted nature of the camps add to the difficulty. Unknown numbers died in flight from Irian Jaya and the size of the cemetery at East Awin is testimony to the numbers of refugees who have died since arriving there. Marriages have taken place, families reformed and babies born. While refugees were willing to talk about deaths that occurred during their flight from Irian Jaya, it was not possible to question thousands of people to get an overall picture, nor to discover real causes of death or ages (especially of elderly persons) of the deceased.

The most recent information on refugees outside of camps is contained in *A Study of West Papuan Permitted Refugees in PNG - 1988* (Rakova 1988) issued by the Catholic Commission for Justice, Peace and Development. The aim of the survey was to discover the exact population of West Papuans still living on Permissive Residential Status for more than 10 years, with the ultimate aim of the CCJPD furthering its assistance to them. There are no government welfare benefits paid in Papua New Guinea and the CCJPD and other church organisations have been important suppliers of aid to refugees..

The report does not provide information relating to total population numbers but is of interest despite the small sample; Rakova obtained responses from 248 people, others did not return her questionnaire. Rakova stated that there are many more West Papuans living in Papua New Guinea than the number she located, and despite visiting the seven urban centres of Port Moresby, Kieta, Rabaul, Wewak, Vanimo, Manus, Madang and Lae, there are many other places she could not include. The report included some of those who had been granted Papua New Guinea citizenship. Despite the restrictions and the impossibility of locating more than a fraction of the total West Papuan population, within the sample, less than half had employment and only 35 persons did not wish to obtain citizenship.

This survey is valuable despite its obvious limitations. The 248 people sampled appear to have a high level of education, yet education level does not necessarily correlate with success in employment. Her conclusions suggest that refugees are timid in seeking employment and should be counselled on their rights (Rakova 1988: 18). My inquiries led to similar conclusions. With the exception of a few professional people (medical and business) who were established in careers, tertiary level educated refugees were the least successful in finding work. According to the Department of Foreign Affairs, a West Papuan with Permissive Residence has all the rights of a Papua New Guinean citizen; in fact finding employment in the government sector would be almost impossible.

Most informants stated that as newcomers they did not fit into the *wantok* system and this made it very difficult to obtain work. This system covers the welfare needs, in an informal but important way, of all the members of a clan, or similar language group, and can be extended to include close friends. Many areas of work have been taken over by Papua New Guinean *wantok* groups (particularly unskilled jobs like labouring, garbage collection, road works) and private business people also tend to employ people from their own area. Refugees who had found employment, usually not permanent but over long periods, were skilled in trade work (plumbers, carpenters). These people often had relatives who were long-time residents of Papua New Guinea.

The employment situation in large urban centres is poor. The government had stopped recruiting staff including graduates from the University of Papua New Guinea. Since late 1989, the position has worsened with the closure of the Bougainville mine; the public sector is experiencing critical shortages and small businesses are feeling the effect of less money in the community. There is sympathy for the refugee community, but in such a tightening economy there is very little that can be done for them in regard to employment opportunities, outside of their own community initiatives. While the juxtaposition of the technological and traditional in Papua New Guinea is notable - women camped on the stairs, foyers and paths of imposing modern buildings selling food and other small goods, it is these small scale entrepreneurs who make a living for themselves and their families and survive in the cash economy.

Refugee women have already attempted to join in the informal sector, despite great odds. One woman started a business cooking and selling food. The arduous journey involving three separate sectors on public transport from an out-lying settlement proved to be too difficult. The problems and expenses of travelling to town to find work are great, and services in these areas are non-existent; life for any settlement dweller is precarious.

Austcare/YWCA Program in Port Moresby

This scheme was established in 1986 and is designed to fulfil World YWCA priority concern for refugees (Report to World YWCA 1989). Stated aims are '*to enable Irian Jayans to become self confident, retain their dignity and eventually be economically self sufficient*' (Doko pers. comm. 1989). Practical components include English classes, sewing classes, counselling services and child care, sponsorship and catering projects. Benefits include a meeting place for refugee women, and interaction with Papua New Guinean women. Classes are held at Badili near the Koki market and villages, close to the city centre. Some refugees reside near here, with friends and relatives, but there are transport problems for refugees from other areas. My impression was that the refugees from many areas continue to meet at the central meeting place despite difficulties, to maintain group cohesion.

The officials implementing the project are experienced in similar work with national women, aware of the problems facing urban dwellers today and the difficulties of supplying all their requirements. They are committed to helping refugee women and are sympathetic to their particular problems; they have exercised some degree of flexibility within the restrictions of limited funding. Male refugees have utilised some of the services in Port Moresby and this factor has influenced aspects of the project. Women refugees living in Papua New Guinea outside of the refugee camps have usually accompanied male family members to urban centres. Some male refugees were sent to urban centres at different times, for their own safety, or arrived after lengthy periods at the Wabo holding camps. Many of the political activists escaped from Indonesian military attention after attending meetings or rallies in Jayapura while students, or for family affiliation with activists. These young males were students at

university or theology colleges and in many cases, because of no prospects of employment or fixed residence, remain single. In the camps, some males were forced to leave wives and mothers in home villages as they fled Jayapura literally running for their lives. Some males in the camps had remarried (years later), others had no contact with close relatives because of years spent in the bush, and now feared attracting attention to their families by attempting to write to them.

Numbers of women enrolled in the English language course decreased to the point where the classes were discontinued in late 1989 (evaluations to identify problems and set solutions were taking place during my visit), while men utilised the counselling services, all requesting practical assistance with housing or finances. Refugee men also were involved in assisting the program. An impression is that the West Papuans of this educated urban group perceive themselves, and function first as part of the refugee body, without the strongly divisive attitudes apparent in Papua New Guinean male/female attitudes. It is not possible to judge whether a real cultural difference exists (as informants asserted) or if the relatively harmonious co-operation is a product of the traumatic situation in Irian Jaya, and existence as refugees.

The refugee women interviewed in Port Moresby were all part of family units - wives and mothers - and many wanted assistance to set up businesses within this unit, rather than with other women. The YWCA funds were sufficient for a group project, not for the many individuals who requested funding separately. However the experience of YWCA personnel in the early stages of this scheme have alerted them to the most basic needs of the refugees and projects are being developed along these lines, with less differentiation along gender lines. The fall-off in numbers at the English classes may be caused by a perception that there is no financial reward involved, and time and fare money may be better spent. Also, families are living in areas where the vernacular or *tokpisin* is used, with very few opportunities to speak or hear English, and women believe that English is not necessary for the sort of life they live.

Education in this area is important and women particularly should be strongly encouraged to persist in learning English. The YWCA is aware of the value of the counselling service, and the necessity for education in their rights as refugees was also included in Rakova's report (1989: 18). Proficiency in English is a long-term asset which could assist the integration of the refugees and prevent them becoming an enclave or an under-privileged class within Papua New Guinea society. Their own identity is not at risk; successive colonial governments in their own country have prescribed the use of foreign languages for participation in education, government and business, and comprehension of English is needed to function within these sectors of society.

A major problem for refugees living in Papua New Guinea is finding money for school fees for their children. Within the national population, family finances are stretched to keep children at school and the major proportion of primary school leavers do not achieve admittance to secondary levels. There are no special allowances for refugee families, with the exception of some UN funding for tertiary courses. Refugees do not qualify for tertiary level subsidies even if they pass the entrance testing procedure.

All refugees interviewed consider it a priority for their children to attend school and are willing to make sacrifices to obtain this goal. A few of the children of refugees in Port Moresby are attending mission-run secondary boarding schools in centres where ties were made during the Vanimo/Wako/Wabo transit to the city. Children from out-lying settlements travel to inner suburban schools considered superior in standards by their families, despite the long distances and bus fares required. Some parents told me they preferred the schools because of problems with local schools (enrolments or bad behaviour) and also other refugee children attended the preferred schools.

These actions demonstrate positive attitudes towards the value of education held by educated and 'blue collar' workers in urban settlements. Conclusions drawn from interviews with refugees and supported by the findings of the YWCA officials

involved in the Austcare/YWCA scheme are that most refugees are interested in assistance to set themselves up in business ventures, and financial aid, to pay for housing materials, school fees, and commercial training courses are also sought. Assistance to establish themselves on land, such as the settlements where blocks can be obtained and rates paid to the Housing Commission, is a priority need. Obviously these goals are those of all citizens, particularly the landless urban dwellers. The assistance of the UNHCR applies to the refugees in the official camps, and this is limited, tapering off as they become self-sufficient. The special grants (for secondary, tertiary and vocational training) are available to a selected few.

Understandably, officials of government bodies, while sympathetic to the position of refugees, cannot supply services unavailable to their own nationals. *'The same law of the land that to the ordinary people of PNG applies to the West Papuans PR holders as well'* (Rakova 1988: 13). The CCJPD has given welfare assistance to many of the refugees living in Port Moresby, in cash, goods and services, including supporting self-help projects, such as constructing dwellings. The CCJPD with the UNHCR sponsors some students, and is available for any advice and counselling required; it continues to negotiate for Papua New Guinean citizenship for PR holders and for their integration into adopted families and clans (Rakova 1988: 15). Despite her degree in Social Work and the report she had completed on refugees, Rakova did not expect to find employment in 1990 due to the government's decision to halt recruitment of graduates due to the economic downturn (interview with Rakova at UPNG).

Prospects for most refugees living outside of the camps, usually in urban centres, are not good. The official attitude is that as permitted residents, they have the same opportunities as citizens of Papua New Guinea. In reality, the educated refugees do not have the chance of employment in their field of expertise and many of them have spent years without work or permanent place of residence. Life is a day to day battle for survival assisted by relatives, friends, and organisations, particularly churches to which the refugees have affiliations. The CCJPD assists in practical ways and maintains a commitment to the refugee population, as does the YWCA. These

organisations have the advantages of long-term operation in Papua New Guinea, and indigenous expertise, but are also constrained by their obligations to other disadvantaged Papua New Guinean citizens. The efforts of these, and other concerned organisations such as the citizenship advisory committee formed in 1988, were rewarded on 27 April 1990 when a refugee applicant was included among 112 people granted citizenship. This new citizen, and others like him, had applied previously over more than a decade of residence (*Times of PNG* 1990: 30). With regard to citizenship applications from refugees, only 157 of the two thousand or so eligible applicants had received citizenship by 1986, the last people being granted certificates in 1977 (Blaskett 1986: 8).

Government and non-government organisations within Australia have not specifically targeted the refugees for project assistance. While Australia has been the largest donor of funds to the UNHCR for the West Papuan refugee program, this financial support is disseminated according to UNHCR protocol and is not perceived by refugees as assistance from Australia. The provision of highly skilled health workers and equipment such as trucks in the camps by ZOA (Netherlands overseas aid organisation) although non-political, is seen positively by the refugees as input from their original colonial government. As the more recent pre-independence colonial government of Papua New Guinea, it would seem reasonable that Australian government and non-government organisations supply aid overtly.

There is not a high degree of interest within Australian organisations, nor the general population, in the refugee situation. Some organisations are implementing programs directing aid to Indonesia to resettle displaced persons or assist returning refugees. This does not redress the problem of the great numbers of refugees who have no intention of returning in the near future, despite the many problems facing them in Papua New Guinea. Other organisations became involved following the drastic situation on the border in 1984, but direct major initiatives to larger problems on the international scene. The refugee problem in Papua New Guinea is not large in comparison to the vast and seemingly intractable problems in other countries. However, despite media inattention, it does exist, and will remain as the situation,

physically and morally, most relevant to Australia's sphere of interest. Because of the relative size of the problem, there is the real possibility of providing assistance that will have positive benefits.

Due to the untied nature of Australia's aid, and the economic difficulties experienced recently by Papua New Guinea, it is unrealistic to expect the Papua New Guinea government to do more than it has done already. Positively, they have extended refuge and provided land for resettlement following events in a neighbouring country over which they had no control. Organisations from Australia should now participate in a positive manner: the refugees in urban centres where infrastructure is in place require financial assistance to participate in training schemes, direction toward employment and into permanent housing.

Interviewing refugees in Port Moresby who were attempting, in the main, to settle into a new country and make the best of their life there, stressed the transience and helplessness of those trapped in their Western Province seclusion. Any schemes to assist with sustainable agricultural subsistence and eventual production of marketable commodities in the East Awin resettlement camps will have the twin results of ensuring its residential viability, and persuading those refugees reluctant to vacate the old border camps that life may be better at East Awin. The possibility of successful outside project assistance is bleak, given the record of similar attempts to establish such schemes in rural areas. My field work reinforced these findings; the almost impossible task of establishing infrastructure in an isolated and 'backward' area like the Western Province makes the likelihood of small-scale village projects succeeding remote.

It is difficult for refugees to resign themselves to a life as subsistence gardeners in an alien inland forest environment. Most of them expressed hope and indeed maintain a conviction that eventually they will return to their homeland; life in refugee camps is an enforced mode of existence and temporary respite from Indonesian persecution. In the meantime attempts at starting a camp economy must be seen as positive manifestations of change.

CHAPTER NINE

PROSPECTS FOR REFUGEES

Repatriation or resettlement; fading hopes for third country acceptance, and continuing Indonesian military aggression on the border.

The refugees who entered Papua New Guinea in the early 1980s have remained in the border camps for a decade, and at the East Awin relocation site for more than five years, unsure of future direction in their lives. In Chapter One, I began by describing the physical conditions under which I carried out fieldwork to stress the isolation of the East Awin camps, and linked this in Chapter Five to the under-developed, neglected state of the Western Province for an understanding of the difficulties of sustained subsistence agriculture and marketing. In Chapter Two, a background of the refugees included their own struggle for self-determination against a wider picture of other independence movements in the Melanesian Pacific region, and how the outside world, including the media, has attempted to portray, or to suppress, their causes.

Chapter Three located West Papuans as a Fourth World people resisting incorporation in to the Indonesian state, and gave the history of the organisation of the West Papuan Military resistance. Chapter Four looked at the geographical siting of Indonesia and New Guinea, and the strategic importance of the Indonesian archipelago to world powers as a reason for the failure to assist the West Papuan people. Chapter Six examined Transmigration, particularly to Irian Jaya, as an important factor in the creation of a West Papuan refugee community. Chapter Seven was concerned with the events leading up to the exodus, border camps and problems engendered by them; the perilous living conditions in the camps and the move to a more controlled, centrally organised camp in isolated forest country away from the border. In Chapter Eight I described the living conditions and the difficulties living in isolation at East Awin; the possibility of acceptance into another country or community, and the situation of refugees already out of the camps.

In conclusion I will summarise the continuing Indonesian acts of aggression that clearly show the border as an area of unresolved contention between the two countries; the military

interference in Irian Jaya that forces refugees to continue to enter Papua New Guinea; the collusion between Papua New Guinean and Indonesian politicians. The unwillingness of a third country to accept the refugees is briefly examined against Australia's immigration policies. It does not seem likely that refugees will be accepted by a third country, on present indications and past evidence. Racist attitudes denied in official policy, remain a feature of Australian foreign affairs policy and it is safe to predict that refugees will not be allowed to enter Australia, the obvious country of choice. As Sir John Guise noted in 1985:

> *If it's humanitarian for Australia to provide refugee status for Vietnamese people but decline under diplomatic excuses and double talk that it may not accept Melanesian refugees into Australia; as she did with Papuans before Independence, then it is clear that she retains within her conscience a streak of dishonesty, racism and double back door dealing in the diplomatic world; an image she will always be identified with for a long time to come* (Guise 1985: 36).

Bill Hayden, while Australian Foreign Minister, advised Papua New Guinea as *'a sovereign, independent nation, with your claims of being a democratic state'* to take in the refugees. While obviously aware of the usual third country policy, Hayden made it quite clear that Australia *'may not accept Irian Jayan refugees'*. He also stressed that *'screening and selection of applications wishing to settle in Australia almost precludes most Irian Jaya refugees who may want to live in Australia'* (interview in *The Times of PNG* 9 November 1985:3).

As the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade noted in its Conclusions and Recommendations (1991: xxix), Australia has contributed funds for the running of the refugee camps but has not made an offer of resettlement for the refugees, noting that the Torres Strait border raises concerns of illegal entry as well. Australia has in the past evaded the acceptance of Melanesian refugees by resorting to legalities. In the event of refugees arriving, as they have done via the Torres Strait Islands, the Australian government has dealt with them by imprisonment and protracted court cases (Osborne 1985d: 6; Hastings 1986: 218). The best publicised case relates to the 'Irian Jaya five', five West Papuans who left Merauke in Irian Jaya for Papua New Guinea and entered Australia through the Torres Strait in 1985.

In 1978, refugees had appeared in the bush near the Bensbach River in the Western

Province, appealing for help and displaying a banner with the initials MUFGS (see Figs. 1 and 2); it was the first time I had heard of this organisation and met refugees still living in the bush. The 'Irian Jaya five' belonged to this organisation.

> According to Hastings (1986: 219): *the five arrivals claimed membership of a fairly new Irianese nationalist organisation, MUFGAS, an English language acronym for Melanesian Union from Gag to Samarai. (Gag is a tiny island west of the Bird's Head and Samarai an island off the tail of Papua.) The acronym reflects the earlier slogan, espoused by Papuan leaders of the former Volksraad in seeking to promote a one island federation, from Sarong to Samarai. This in turn was a play on the Indonesian slogan of the 1950s, from Sabang to Merauke. According to the five, MUFGAS represents a new political movement which rejects to OPM's 'armed terrorism', seeking to promote one-island unity through means of peaceful propaganda and example.*

Immigration Minister (at the time) Chris Hurford, announced that Australia would not grant asylum to the five men; he stated that Australia would not become a home for Indonesian dissidents or economic refugees, and intended to maintain good relations with the Indonesian government. Following this brisk dismissal, Hurford went on to warn the men that anyone who attempted to gain asylum would be sent to a third country for resettlement. He stated that:

> *while they may wish to remain in tropical Australia, fishing with their ethnically-alike cousins, they could find themselves being deported to countries with cold climates. Australia had no intention of letting them live here on social security payments* (Hurford quoted by Osborne 1985d: 6).

Hastings (1986: 218), discussing the many Melanesian refugees - 'canoe people' - that Australia may expect to arrive, makes the point that it will be difficult to sort out the genuine refugees from the 'economic' refugees (as Papua New Guinea attempted to separate the 'genuine refugees' from the 'border crossers'). Following a fact-finding trip to the Torres Strait Islands, Luke Hardy, executive officer to the Refugee Council of Australia, did not support the 'canoe influx theory' and stated that the Melanesian 'Irian Jaya five' were neither hard line political activists nor 'figures seeking fortunes abroad' (Osborne 1985d: 6). Further he did not see that Australia's granting the 'Irian Jaya five' refugee asylum could have been interpreted as a hostile act by the Indonesian government. He based this notion on the fact that Australia has taken thousands of refugees from Vietnam and official relations with Hanoi had not disintegrated. Also, Vietnamese boat arrivals ceased as

conditions in Vietnam improved. Like the Papuan Sir John Guise, Anere (1985: 6) wrote of West Papuan refugees posing a race problem for Australia. He also discussed the economic and skills criteria relevant to the Australian economy which applies to immigrants. This is a useful blanket for rejection used by governments to suppress discussions of Melanesian refugee intake - in reality, black, uneducated, poor.

During the 1980s a few high-profile refugees were sent to third countries far removed from the Asian-Pacific region, as Minister Hurford warned any newcomers considering an attempt to enter Australia. These included Ghana, Greece, the Netherlands and Scandinavian countries. James Hyaaro and Alex Donald Derey, OPM leaders, were deported to Ghana with Geradus Thommy, described by Dorney (1990: 257) as the most effective commander ever in the southern border region. Deportations to Indonesia are continuing; OPM fighter Salosa was killed by the Indonesians after being deported from Papua New Guinea in July 1990. Salosa's deportation appeared to be legally arbitrary and essentially political, although consistent with Somare's warning earlier in July that OPM 'troublemakers' would be handed back to Indonesian authorities (Murphy *et al* 1990: 4).

OPM spokesman Malthius Kambu stated to the Post Courier that *'they (the Indonesians) are not going to take him to Jayapura. It's more likely he'll be finished on the road along the way'*. He likened the deportation of a 'bride-price' for a senior Foreign Affairs official to marry an Indonesian woman. This allegations has not been denied by the Papua New Guinea government (Murphy *et al* 1990: 4). Kambu's allegation of Salosa's death warrant is consistent with historical precedent where internationally known and respected West Papuans Arnold Ap and Eduard Mofu were tortured and murdered while 'escaping' in April 1984 (Budiardjo and Liong 1988: 132). A protest letter from *Tapol* condemning Salosa's deportation and holding the Papua New Guinea government solely responsible was published in *The Times of PNG* on 17 August 1990, and the CCJPD also publicly protested in the *Post Courier* of 17 August 1990. Chairman of the Sandaun (West Sepik Province) People's Front, John Tekwie, sure that Salosa's life was at stake, also strongly protested. *'It would be better if Mr Salosa was deported to a third country, not Indonesia'* (Murphy *et al* 1990: 5).

With no formal extradition treaty made between Papua New Guinea and Indonesia, the

legal position of deportees and the Papua New Guinea government is vague. Despite the optimistically flowery titles of past friendships pacts (Treaty of Mutual Respect, Friendship and Co-operation, October 1986) and the earlier 'smiling policy' announced by Indonesia's Defence minister General Jusuf in 1978 (May 1986: 157), the attitude of Indonesian authorities is consistent; Indonesian co-operation rests on the premise that Papua New Guinea is 'accommodating' and Indonesian action on the border takes place regardless of 'friendship' and 'mutual respect.' As a representative of the Indonesian Embassy in Papua New Guinea stated in August 1990:

> *The two countries enjoy special and harmonious relations that nothing, not even the present problems, would taint. I have heard only of the protest your country has made. Don't you know that our governments are on good terms and co-ordinating things well?* (Post Courier 17 August 1990).

In the Australian Parliament, 23 August 1990, Senator Jo Vallentine questioned the Australian government's view of the Salosa deportation (question no. 149). In answer to this, and in a letter to Russell Rollason of the Australian Council for Overseas Aid, Australian Foreign Affairs Minister Gareth Evans was, predicably, unwilling to condemn the Papua New Guinea government for this action.

> *I have no information to indicate the deportation of Salosa was not legally well founded. Salosa did not have refugee status* (Evans quoted in Murphy *et al* 1990: 5).

Salosa's death occurred a little more than a year after he had been handed over to the Indonesian military authorities. According to the Indonesian security forces, he was found dead, after they claimed he and another prisoner escaped, sawing through the iron bars of their cell and scaling a 5 metre high wall. Like Arnold Ap and Eduard Mofu, Salosa's body bore signs of torture. Weristouw, a former West Papuan policeman serving 13 years for distributing copies of a patriotic song to school children, was witness to the 'escape'. He has since died in military custody (Boyle 1991: 5).

The Papua New Guinea consulate which opened in Jayapura in 1989, provides an avenue for managing border crossing (Maclellen 1990: 11) but has already deviated from international practice by handing over to the Indonesian authorities seven West Papuans who sought asylum there after an Indonesian crack-down on a planned flag-raising in Jayapura on 14 December 1989; four hundred people were arrested (Murphy 1991: 69).

The flag-raising was to have marked the first anniversary of Dr. Thomas Wainggai's declaration of an independent 'West Melanesia' in December 1988. Dr. Wainggai is currently serving a twenty year goal sentence in Jakarta, and his Japanese-born wife, fourteen years for sewing the flag used in the incident. Dr. Wainggai's action represented a deviation from most flag-raisings which have involved the OPM and used the Morning Star flag; Wainggai drew upon his close fundamentalist Christian connections in *'a teleological Christian argument about the political destiny of West Papua to declare an independent 'West Melanesia''* (Murphy 1991: 69). According to Murphy, Wainggai has *'situated the West Papuan cause in the context of a wider Melanesian struggle, using a global view of Melanesian oppression under colonialist powers, rather than treating the West Papuan struggle as a specific relationship between one oppressor (Indonesia) and one oppressed (West Papuans)'* (Murphy 1991: 69-70). Despite international press coverage, no action was taken to help the asylum seekers and *Tapol* reported that the seven, four men, one woman and two children, were on trial in Jayapura. The enormity of the Wainggai sentences sparked enough out-rage for their case to be taken up by Amnesty International *(Amnesty International Australian Newsletter* July 1991: 14). Despite the price nationalists like Salosa and Wainggai pay, in full awareness of the history of martyrdom of their compatriots, incidents of political disobedience and armed resistance continue.

Outsiders who attempt to assist the West Papuan resistance also risk punishment, not as severe, and in some cases from the government of Papua New Guinea. In 1988 Swiss mission pilot Theo Frey escaped from Irian Jaya, via Australia, in a mission aircraft, returning to Switzerland, where he organised a secret return trip to Irian Jaya. Frey and a Swiss camera man landed in the inaccessible eastern part of Irian Jaya (close to the border at Kiunga). The landing strip had been constructed by members of the OPM. Frey planned to make a movie about West Papuan resistance which had been commissioned by two European TV stations. The plane bogged down in the mud and Frey was forced to walk through the jungle across the international border into Papua New Guinea where he was arrested and sentenced to two months gaol. I arrived at East Awin shortly after Frey had entered Papua New Guinea and although I did not see the airstrip constructed by the OPM, I spoke to people who had talked with him and seen the jungle strip. Frey met a regional OPM commanding officer who claimed there were 5000 active fighters in the region.

A more conservative view regarding the resistance is that *'active members probably number no more than 200, and OPM violence has died down considerably after a flurry of activity in the late 1980s'* (Schwarz 1991: 24). Schwarz however goes on to detail the 3 major attacks on transmigration sites in 1989 which he notes resulted in the deaths of 20 civilians. Schwarz does note the degree of support the organisations still enjoys in Indonesia's eastern most province, even claiming that a *'publicity stunt the OPM sometimes employs is to drive Irianese across the border into Papua New Guinea. Inspired by the OPM, more than 11,000 Irianese sought refuge in Papua New Guinea in 1984-86, according to Amnesty International, the London-based human rights group'* (1991: 24). This is a major feat, if it were true that the OPM was solely responsible for the 1984 exodus, and Schwarz does not specify which Amnesty article he refers to - it is unlikely that either figure on OPM 'membership' is correct, but the disparity shows how difficult it is for anyone to put a figure to OPM numbers. As village people and fighters alike insist - *'We are all OPM!'*

The most sinister part of Frey's story, reported by AWPA (1991: 11), is the alleged threat made by Australian authorities in Cairns, Australia to the West Papuan who had helped Frey from the bogged plane to Papua New Guinea. Deported from Papua New Guinea, enroute to Switzerland, he was threatened with deportation to Jakarta if he did not reveal the whereabouts of the plane. Two days after telling the Australian authorities, the Indonesian army landed, removed the plane, burnt down nearby village houses, and killed two women who were there at the time.

The border situation during June, July and August 1990, according to AWPA, saw ferocious and frequent Indonesian-OPM military clashes in which Indonesian forces have repeatedly encroached upon Papua New Guinea territory (Murphy *et al* 1990). According to AWPA's October 1990 newsletter, the fighting has resulted in the deaths of at least fifteen West Papuans and three Indonesian soldiers, the arrests by Indonesian troops of about 11 OPM suspects, the destruction of villages, and the crossing of another 1000 West Papuans into Papua New Guinea. On July 15, Indonesian soldiers raided two villages, Scotchio and Popo, both about eight kms inside Papua New Guinea. They terrorised villagers, damaged school property and destroyed food gardens. Then Papua New Guinea deputy Prime Minister Diro told parliament that he was investigating allegations that seven Papua New

Guinean citizens were taken over to the Indonesian side of the border and killed (*Post Courier* 26 July 1990).

The situation in Irian Jaya remains hidden with isolation from the world contributing to Indonesia's military repression. Successive Papua New Guinea governments have maintained the status quo regarding the border problem while individual politicians, often from the opposition benches, have voiced support for West Papuan self-determination. Yet progressively, a hardening of attitudes has been observed toward the border and particularly toward the OPM, in accord with Indonesian and military interest. The new border agreement issued following the Ninth Join Border Committee held on the 29 and 30 October 1990 at the Garuda Hotel in Jakarta had already been signed in Port Moresby in April by Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas and was ratified at the later meeting. Indonesian representative Minister for Home Affairs Rudini summed up the content briefly, adding that *'more importantly, we will continue to explore the possibility of achieving agreement of extradition' (Jakarta Post* 31 October 1990).

Following the Tenth Joint Border Committee Forum in November 1991, Papua New Guinea Foreign Minister Somare stated that:

> *the close association between PNG and Indonesia grows stronger each year and those elements attempting to disrupt the lives of citizens of both countries will be, as in the past, dealt with in accordance to our laws (Post Courier* 5 November 1991).

This hardening of attitudes has been apparent in the context of the Bougainville crisis and the greater utilisation of police and military forces within Papua New Guinea. The law and order problem in Papua New Guinea has strengthened the power of groups which want to co-operate with the Indonesian government; PNGDF personnel as well as police have been used as 'internal security' against rural and urban criminal gangs, traditional landowners, militant unionists and the secessionists in Bougainville (Maclellan 1990: 13).

Law and order problems, and internal security, are linked to border problems, and the manner in which they are handled. The Indonesian government has warned Papua New Guinea that internal disorder, both in relation to social issues and toward political dissent, are factors that could precipitate Indonesian intervention. President Suharto warned PNGDF

Chief Ted Diro that Indonesia would not hesitate to intervene in the Papua Besena and Bougainville secessionist movements which he saw as communist controlled (*Post Courier* 26 October 1976). Indonesia was as concerned as the departing Australian colonial government that Papua New Guinea would emerge after independence as one united country, although according to Verrier (1975a: 20), the importance they attached to Abaijah's movement stemmed more from media attention given to her, than the actual possibility of Papuan separation from New Guinea.

There has been little real support from Papua New Guinea for the West Papuan people, and support has generally declined with the power of the individual politician. Attempts to supply arms, for instance, have generally been unsuccessful. According to evidence given to the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Australia's Relations with Papua New Guinea (King 1991: 69) *'the very militant nationalistic movement, Melsol - pan Melanesian, pro-Kanak and pro-OPM and sympathetic to the Bougainville struggle'*, still exists, but with little power of action or persuasion.

Former Prime Minister Namaliu made no mention of the November 1991 Dili massacre in his meeting with Suharto in January 1992, and agreed to the framework allowing troops to operate more freely on each side of the border in pursuit of the OPM. In 1990, General Murdani told the Australian opposition leader John Hewson that Papua New Guinea had too few troops to crush the Bougainville rebellion, and that Australia was in a position to help. Murdani warned that *'it would not be healthy for the region if Bougainville was allowed to secede' (Post Courier* 27 July 1990). While continuing crises in Bougainville through 1989-90 have occupied the government to the exclusion of the Indonesian border situation, Papua New Guinea Minister Sabumei has stated that:

> *Right now, the OPM is the least of our worries in any case - though being so firm with our own people on Bougainville we could later review our position on the Irian Jaya rebels, the OPM, to get tougher with them* (Maclellan 1990: 13).

Port Moresby's determination to hold on to Bougainville has dissolved any lingering sympathy in official circles for the OPM's claims for independence from Indonesia, or for the claims of the East Timorese for that matter (*West Papua Update* 14: April 1992).

Ted Diro, a former commander of the PNGDF and leader of the People's Action Party in the Namaliu government, received a gift of K139,000 (A$205,000) from Defence Minister Murdani while visiting Indonesia as Foreign Minister; although Diro defended his acceptance of the money as behaviour befitting a 'big-man', the former Prime Minister Michael Somare labelled the transaction 'high treason' (Vallance 1987: 1). Diro refused to resign and the governor general Sir Serei Eri refused to sack him. A constitutional crisis was avoided by Namaliu asking the Governor General to step down; he resigned before receiving the formal request. The ramifications of Diro's actions regarding the gift from Murdani become more serious when it is considered that at this time, if Diro's People's Action Party had won enough seats at the 1987 elections, he would have become Prime Minister *'owing a large debt of gratitude, if nothing else, to the head of the Indonesian armed forces'* (Dorney 1990: 283). Dorney commented further that in Papua New Guinea, at least, the affair was accepted with an ease that set an amazing precedent for the 1992 elections. The Acting Governor General signed the instruments dismissing Diro from office and by exercising a legal interpretation barred him from contesting the 1992 elections. Following these actions, there were fears of a Papuan uprising which did not eventuate (Kolma 1991: 9).

Against the seriousness of these continuing events, the refugee problem in Papua New Guinea is not a priority for any of the governments of the countries concerned. Many lives were lost in the border camps before the Papua New Guinea authorities were pushed into action (Smith and Hewson 1986: 200-17), after moving the few thousand refugees to the new site at East Awin the government, overwhelmed by events in Bougainville and economic and law and order breakdown. A resolution to their predicament is still far away and their situation remains isolation in a forest-locked camp in a deteriorating environment at East Awin, or a continuing existence in the 'shut-down; border camps where access to Irian Jaya, though precarious, is possible. Some refugees will escape the confines of distance and make their way to the urban centres to attempt to find work, a perilous future handicapped by their alien status and the declining economy.

Despite their fears, some will despair of any future in Papua New Guinea or a third country and continue to accept the offers of the Indonesians and the UNHCR and return to Irian Jaya. Despite the continuing border fighting, and the refugees still entering Papua New

Guinea, refugees from the East Awin camp have continued to return to Irian Jaya since 1990; in December 1990, six hundred were repatriated to the Mindiptanah area while at the same time another six hundred arrived at East Awin from Irian Jaya (*West Papua Update* 10: December 1990). In June 1991, seventy -two persons, the first of many hundreds, accepted repatriation and were airlifted from Papua New Guinea camps back over the border (*The Age* 18 June 1991). Following Indonesian pressure to close the border camps at Green River, Waraston and Amanab, three hundred West Papuans opted for repatriation, one hundred and twenty-one went to East Awin and the rest 'went bush' (Clausen 1991: 6). In January 1992, officials in Papua New Guinea reported three hundred refugees arriving following fighting at an Indonesian military base at Sota, a border village (*West Papua Update* 14: April 1992). Based on reports of refugees returning to Irian Jaya and more arriving at East Awin since 1989, it is impossible to conclude that existence for refugees is any more stable than it was in the early 1980s. Other refugees will leave the relative safety of the camps and return independently, slipping back over the border to continue the struggle in the war of resistance against the Indonesians.

As Nonie Sharp concluded in *The Rule of the Sword* (1977a, 62):

> *For West Irian, the form which exploitation has taken has created a social basis for the spread of resistance. It is in this sense and in the longer term that the West Irian 'solution' of incorporation into Indonesia involves a strategic error for neo-imperial forces; and error which enhances the hope of a future not only for the Melanesian peoples but for their erstwhile oppressors who may come to see that in the dialectics of social life it is now for them to follow -for the 'last will have become foremost'.*

It is fitting, despite the seemingly forlorn future for the refugees, for West Papuans within their country and other secessionists in the region, to end on a note of hope; for the people themselves, both refugees in Papua New Guinea and exiles in other countries to whom I have spoken, have not given up hope. The persistence in the belief that one day - some day - the internal disintegration of the Indonesian state will allow them to return to their homeland and attain their goal of self-determination has become part of their creed and their existence. It is not too late for the world outside to support them.

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